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FRIDAY 26 MAY 1972 • No. 3,665 • Price 10p

min, long dead, is safe for return-
on. Yet there is another, un-
canon. And in that canon,
Ismir Ilyich Ullanov takes a poor
place to the Georgian
marist with the crippled arm.
Vissarionovich Djughashvili,
commonly known as Stalin. The
to-be-formulated slogan, STALIN
IS OUR HERO, is more properly
the property of the present Russian
than any forgotten-by-repeti-
assertion about Lenin's immor-
tal. It was Stalin who bussed the
United Union for thirty of its fifty-
years of existence. It was Stalin
who killed at least 15 million of his
citizens, among them his
military and political asso-
ciates. It was Stalin who killed the
agents in the name of collectiviza-
tion to achieve the Socialist
Revolution.

Sinyavski and Daniel carrying the lid of Pasternak's coffin at his funeral in 1960 (from *Uncensored Russia*).

NATALIA GORBANEVSKAYA :
Red Square at Noon
Translated by Alexander Lieven
288pp. André Deutsch, £2.95.

Selected Poems
 Edited and translated by Daniel
 Weissbort
 156pp. South Hinksey, Oxford
 Carcanet Press, £2 (paperback, 80

Cecil Beaton's memoirs
New novels
Irish nationalism, 1798-1922
Anglo-American Ibsenism
John Wilson Steer
Paul Valéry: the Nation's poet
Letters on Poets, Lord Wigg

Memoirs 594, Fiction 595, 612, The Press 596, Politics 597, 598, Archaeology 599,
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Khrushchev wanted a memorial to be erected to the victims of Stalin; the present leaders erected a memorial to—Stalin. Russia is now set fair on a neo-Stalinist course for reasons which are entirely understandable, given the political upbringing of a Brezhnev. To have pursued the "harcabrained" policies of Khrushchev to their logical conclusion would have meant ending into question—again—the whole continuity of Soviet

Jeff is like

stions. A copy
 and Shinkman's
 authorized free
 A. Hunt, Eng-
 Cathlamet,

Stalin was the heart of the system and the sun came to him. Stalin was an expert in power.

has been published in the Soviet Union.

Until now there has been no concerted Soviet attempt to put Stalin and Stalinism into a balanced historical perspective. Roy Medvedev's *Let History Judge* is precisely such an attempt. Medvedev, philosopher, educationist and historian, wrote this book for a Soviet readership and, going through the proper channels, innocently presented his manuscript to Soviet publishing authorities. It was turned down. He therefore authorized its publication abroad.

In this he was following his twin brother, Zhores, a geneticist, whose books, *The Rise and Fall of T. D. Lysenko* and *The Medvedev Papers* (a masterly study of Soviet bureaucratic obstructionism in practice), have also been published in the West. Zhores also earned himself a place in a "psychiatric" hospital for a time.

Roy Medvedev's work was begun in 1962, during a Khrushchevite period that was less dark than now. It was completed in 1968, when there were already great patches of darkness across the Moscow noon. It is, by any standards, a remarkable book. It is particularly remarkable that it was written in Russia, in the most difficult of circumstances, with no official access to research facilities. Not for Medvedev, as for Marx, the rich resources of some British Museum.

Medvedev has drawn upon personal depositions, letters, never-to-be-published books, and the memory of that political long-distance runner Anastas Mikoyan in a bold and scholarly attempt to look at Stalin from the outside while he himself is still inside the system. It is an admirable feat of mental prestidigitator, for the writing is fresh and the documentation vivid and detailed. We are presented with the fullest list yet of those who perished during the purges. Moreover, there are some fascinating glimpses of that world of the 1930s: of Kaganovich's brother, for example, the Minister of Aviation, shooting himself in Mikoyan's lavatory. Medvedev, though very free with historical parallels to Stalin, is commendably reluctant to reach conclusions without a minute consideration of the evidence. He goes into the whole of the Kirov affair again and concludes that Stalin's guilt in the Kirov assassination, which triggered off the purges, "now appears plausible and, logically and politically, almost proved". He devotes equal scholarly attention to the insistent allegation that Stalin was an agent of the Tsarist secret police. After sifting all the evidence, he rejects the allegation.

Medvedev was expelled from the Party following a KGB put-up job, commonly called a "provokatsiya" in Russian, involving the publication



Roy and Zhores Medvedev



Natalia Gorbanevskaya

of a manuscript by an émigré organization abroad. Nevertheless, he remains, in his own view, a true Marxist-Leninist. Therefore his book is not only an attempt to document the Stalin years; it is also one of political theory. Crudely paraphrased, the theory is that all deviations from Leninism are wrong and that Stalin was a cunning, power-hungry, but far from mad, deviant. The "Dialectic according to Medvedev" is that Stalin was merely a fellow-traveller of the Revolution. "It was not love for suffering humanity," Medvedev writes, that brought Stalin to the Revolution, but his thirst for power, his vanity, his desire to rise above the people and subject them to his will. For Stalin the Party was always just an instrument, a means of reaching his own goals.

After 566 pages of indictment (exposing the myth, fed by Svetlana Alliluyeva and others, that Stalin was ignorant of what was happening in his name) Medvedev reaches the following conclusion: The Soviet Union passed through a serious disease and lost many of its finest sons. When the cult of Stalin's personality was exposed, a great step was made to recovery. But not everything connected with Stalinism is behind us, by no means everything. The process of purifying the Communist movement, of washing out all the layers of Stalinist filth, is not yet finished. It must be carried through to the end.

Medvedev has a touching faith in the underlying health of the Russian body politic. He hopes that the cancerous growth of Stalinism, fecklessly probed by the surgery of the Twentieth and Twenty-Second Party Congresses, will not prove malignant. It is an understandable hope for one who loves his country, who wishes to consider Stalin as a nightmare aberration from the true norm, and who is able to make the jump of faith

back to the alleged pristinities of a blameless Lenin. Medvedev's political theory begs many questions for those whose unenviable task it is, in studying Soviet power, to separate the actual from the desirable. First, what are the organizational faults in a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist state that allow a tyrant to kill millions of his fellow citizens in the name of Marx or Lenin—or in his own name, or anybody else's? Secondly, what is now to stop some as yet mute, inglorious Ivan Ivanovich Pronin from plotting and killing, as Stalin plotted and killed? Where are the checks and balances? Because of his theory, Medvedev has never to address himself to these crude but capital questions.

Above all, Medvedev ignores the question of power as exemplified throughout the whole history of the Soviet state. Lenin, who could be quite as ruthless as Stalin, understood that the Soviet Union is about power, about seizing power and then holding on to it; about using power, about abusing power. Stalin understood this. Brezhnev understands it. Medvedev will have none of this, preferring to put his faith in an as yet unpractised ideology.

Limits of de-Stalinization

The best part of Abraham Rothberg's *The Heirs of Stalin* is his final analysis of the Stalinist legacy. Here he shows a cognizance of how absolute power can corrupt absolutely not always to be found in the writings of American scholars. "What," he asks, "if the offspring of the Revolution is truly and inevitably Stalin the cruel paranoid... a canonized social and political organism? What indeed? Especially if, like Medvedev, one would have us believe that the cancer was confined

to Stalin alone. Mr Rothberg's book is a useful summary, as its subtitle suggests, of "Dissidence and the Soviet Regime" since the death of Stalin. He sees clearly enough that de-Stalinization was never to be confused with liberalization, as it often was in the West. "People," he writes, "were not to be given enough freedom to contest seriously the decisions and purposes of the centre, only enough to fulfil the centre's purpose more effectively." In other words, there was to be a bit more carrot, and a little less stick, but the principle of centralized direction was to remain unaffected. The title of the book, *The Heirs of Stalin*, is taken from the poem by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Throughout the book there is a curious reverence for the obiter dicta of that talented hard-currency cultural export who is, by turns, "outspeak" and *Pravda's* poet laureate. Equally curious is the intention of the publishers' proof-readers—even Stalin did not slaughter the Party to the extent that only 50,000 members survived.

Mr Rothberg relies heavily on secondary sources from Moscow, including reports from Western correspondents there. There can be no substitute, however, for the real thing; particularly when, to paraphrase that *echi* dissident Andrei Amalrik, the fish have begun to speak. *The Chronicle of Current Events* is a very unofficial journal, passed from hand to hand in the Soviet Union. A recipient will read it, retype it with as many carbons as he can lay his hands on, and then distribute these copies to his friends. This process is laconically known as *sanizdat* ("self-publishing"), by analogy with *gosizdat* or state publishing. The *Chronicle* concerns itself with the struggle, and therefore, inevitably, with the fate, of those who want human rights in the Soviet Union. Such people are

known as "dissidents" in the West. When the *Chronicle* began publication in 1968 (long after the beginning of *sanizdat* itself) its composition was small, but it grew. During a kitchen and a bathroom, perhaps, nine other family members, it is difficult to achieve domestic harmony and to write dispassionately. In such surroundings, one can also assume that the reader's lower depths than the brave world presented by Soviet propaganda.

It is to this sociological soup that KGB adds its own ingredients. The dissident is followed everywhere by KGB agents (some of whom are more reminiscent of the lower depths than the brave world presented by Soviet propaganda). Your mail is heaped with plain clothes KGB and it is with as many as possible; the freedom to think, feel, talk, write for himself as an individual is so doing, he has opted out of "collective", which means, the looking-glass, that he has opted out of having any leader.

The dissidents, nevertheless, are one thing in common: courage. A courage unimagined and unimaginable by those who talk about "alternative society" in the West. Many of the dissidents had been in the labour camp, or in Siberian or Eastern exile. Possibly the worst of those to be sent to a psychiatric hospital (where General Grigolov, among others, now languishes) the most dreaded being the one already mad, drugs may make it against this background that the fate of those men and women brave enough to say that with the rule of law to prevail in the Soviet Union. They rely for their lives on two documents: the Stalin Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights. Both of them are enforceable in Soviet law. Neither of them is enforced. The dissidents are confronted most frequently with two articles of the Russian Federation Criminal Code, articles 70 and 190-1. Both deal with "slandering the Soviet Union and its political and social system". The maximum term under Article 70 is twelve years' "deprivation of freedom" and "exile". These two articles are enforced. *Uncensored Russia* tells us how.

The penalties of protest

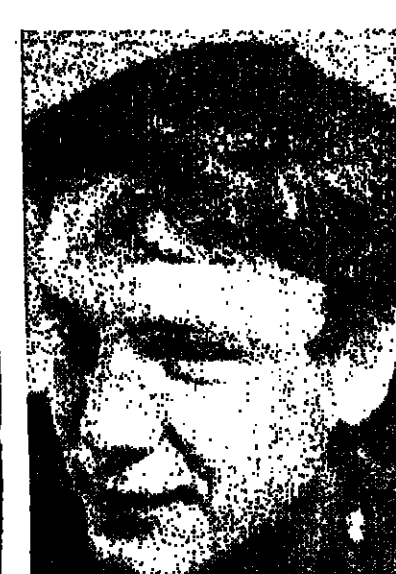
The only person ever to be connected, publicly, with the compilation of the *Chronicle of Current Events* is Natalia Gorbanevskaya, born 1936, mother of two, unmarried. She was one of eight people who, on August 25, 1968, demonstrated on Red Square against the invasion of Czechoslovakia. It was one of the longest genuinely spontaneous demonstrations in recent Russian history: it lasted four to five minutes. The eight converged at the Lobnyaya Mesto ("where you put your forehead to have your head cut off"), the ancient execution place just in front of St Basil's Cathedral. There they displayed their crude home-made placards—"Stop Soviet interference in Czechoslovakia", and the like. They were immediately set on by individuals in the throng of people which is always milling about that particular place. Their placards were wrenched away and broken up. "Dirty Yids!" somebody shouted. They were physically assaulted. And as always on these occasions there was somebody, usually an old woman, but in this case a young one, who opined in the direction of farms that they should be done to death: these haridians are the direct legacies of Stalin. At this point the plainclothes KGB operatives, who had



Alexander Ginzburg



Anatoli Marchenko



Vladimir Bukovski

been following the demonstrators all the way from their homes, closed in and bundled them into cars with the maximum unnecessary violence.

Five of the demonstrators (including Pavel Litvinov, grandson of the former Russian Foreign Minister, and Larissa Daniel, wife of Yuli) were eventually brought to trial and sentenced to various terms of exile. One of the demonstrators, Viktor Fainberg, lost many teeth during his arrest and in this unrepresentative state was never presented for trial; instead, he was put into a psychiatric hospital, where he remains to this day.

Natalia Gorbanevskaya was not brought to trial immediately, allegedly because of her two young children, the youngest of which, not then one year old, she had with her on Red Square. Instead, she received out-patient treatment for an alleged psychiatric disorder. She used her time of freedom to compile an account of the demonstration and the subsequent trial. It is now published, in an excellent translation by Alexander Lieven, as *Red Square at Noon* (slightly abridged from the Russian original, which went by the simple title *Noon*). The book contains large parts of a transcript of the trial. Anyone who might incline to think that Soviet justice gets a bad press in the West would be well advised to read this book. If the circumstances were not tragic, it would read like some Iff and Patoys story. I listen to that shade of Vyshinski, the Prosecutor.

The accused Litvinov and Delons were holding the banner "For Your Freedom and Ours". But what sort of freedom is intended in this case? If it is the freedom to hold such disorderly assemblies, the freedom to slander, then such a freedom does not and shall not exist. The slogan—"For a Free and Independent Czechoslovakia". Should Babalik not have known that it was just so that Czechoslovakia might be free and independent that troops of the socialist countries were sent there?

It is just worth pointing out that the Stalin Constitution enjoins, nay proclaims, freedom of assembly and freedom of conscience.

There was even a prosecution suggestion that the accused should have informed the authorities of their intention to demonstrate so that they could have had protection. One is happy to read that even in that small closed court this suggestion met with the only possible response: laughter.

Over a slow fire

Red Square at Noon is a positive hymn to the courage of men and women like Litvinov and Larissa Daniel and Gorbanevskaya herself. They came to the Execution Place knowing full well what the consequences would be. Gorbanevskaya herself was eventually brought to trial and sentenced (one uses the word advisedly) to a psychiatric hospital. Her term there ran from July, 1970, until February, 1972. "We commit no crimes," she writes, "that require concentration, while we are punished, as a rule, only for our convictions. And what is a conviction worth if it has to be hidden?"

Gorbanevskaya's poems, now published in a translation by Daniel Weisskopf, read as intently as may be. Gorbanevskaya has every right to be taunt:

Don't touch me! I scream at pavers-by— they don't notice me. Cursing alien rooms. I hang about alien lobbies. But who will put a window in the wall? Who'll stretch out a hand to me? I am roasting over a slow fire. The book of poems also contains, somewhat uncomfortably, a Western

psychiatric judgment of whether she is mad or not (conclusion: she is not) and, more appropos, an account of her trial.

The more politically sophisticated dissidents admit that they can have little influence in changing the Russian pattern of events or even in improving the quality of Russian life. Few people, except the KGB, among the stodgy apathetic millions have heard of them, and then only through the foreign radio stations or if their trial has been pre-judged in the official press. In a word, the dissidents have no power.

Yet they go on, propelled by an inner compulsion, being picked off, one by one, at intervals of roughly six months (perhaps the KGB, too, works to a wall-chart "plan"), being sent to prison or exile for years and years and then coming back, like Amalrik and Bukovski for more. They have got into the habit of thinking free of thinking out of the surrounding mental drabness that contains and nourishes Stalinism. And once that habit, dearly bought, is indulged, it is difficult to shake off. Salvation has been reached.

A Western argument attaches itself to this personal salvation. The argument goes like this. The dissidents' courage rubs off on those they meet, in the camps and without. The dissidents' probity, shining through the thin paper of the *sanizdat* publications, could, much more heavily concentrated, penetrate the skull even of the latter-day nuthinks. Much more thinly spread it could cover the whole of the Soviet Empire. But Russia remains Russian. Let wishful-thinking liberals ponder this cautionary tale: There are three boiling cauldrons. In each of them Soviet citizens are boiling away. A group of Western tourists is being shown the cauldrons as part of their hard-currency tour. The tourists are in the charge of a pretty young In-tourist guide. "Here," she says, pointing to the first cauldron, "here are the Armenians. They are not allowed out." The Armenians boil on cue. "Coming to the second cauldron," she continues, "we have the Jews. According to the provisions of our Constitution, they are allowed out from time to time, but there is nowhere for them to go." The tourists gaze open-mouthed at the people in the third cauldron. "Who are these?" a tourist asks. "The people in the third cauldron huddle wretchedly together in the winter bubbles round them. "Those," the guide says, spitting, "are the Russians." "Are they allowed out?" the tourist asks. "They are allowed out at any time," the guide says. "But they rarely leave their cauldron. When they do it is only to collect more firewood. They bring the firewood back, stake up the cauldron, and then get back in again."

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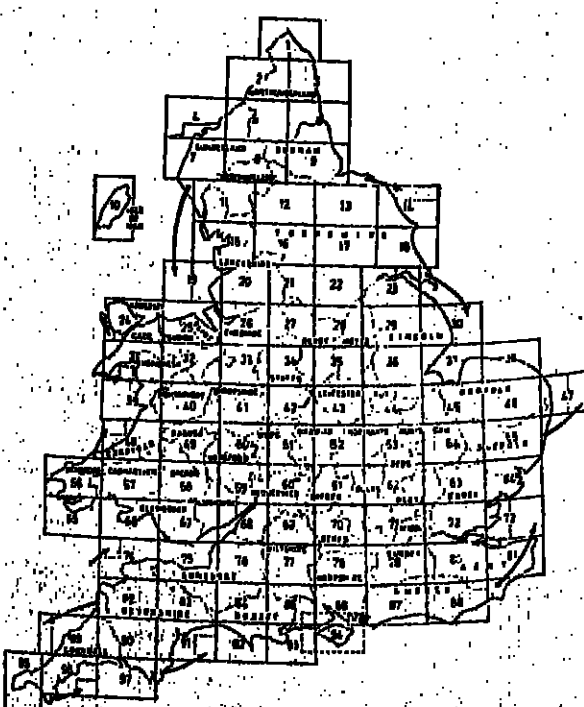
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In love with La Divina

CECIL BEATON:
The Happy Years. Diaries 1944-48
248pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£2.25.

The years are happy for several reasons. The long war is almost over. France is liberated and Cecil Beaton is asked by the Ministry of Information to mount an exhibition of photographs in Paris, showing Britain at War. This involves staying at the British Embassy with delightful Lady Diana and darning Duff, renewing contacts with Cocteau, Cartier-Bresson, R  ard, Kuchma, Picasso and Gide. The war is not over quite yet. Churchill and de Gaulle must be photographed at the front. But the world is opening up, though "victory does not bring with it a sense of triumph—rather a dull numbness of relief that the blood-letting is over".

Even before the "magnitude and horror" of Hiroshima, Mr Beaton's postwar prospects brightened. He had previously designed only a ballet or two, a "much-too-literary play and an odd costume here and there". Now Binkie Beaumont gave him the chance of designing *Lady Windermere's Fan* for Gielgud; and one thing leading to another, that meant his designing *An Ideal Husband* in the United States, and then a seven-year contract with Alexander Korda. He was in demand as a ballet-designer, and there was of course *Vogue* in London, Paris and New York, to say nothing of Cond   Nast and others.

No dearth of work, but a realization of limitations. At dinner at Sybil Cholmondeley's with Churchill, Field Marshal Alexander, Lady Wimburne and Brendan Bracken, I realized how remote I have become from the ordinary man of intelligence. Not only in the field of politics and government, but in history, in social problems, and in the events of the day. I found myself tongue-tied and with no opinions to voice.

But, tongue-tied or not, Mr Beaton always has eyes to see, ears to hear and a pen to record: Churchill was harsh in his criticism of Sir Stafford Cripps ("that parrot Trotskyite") whom he quoted as being only one person who didn't enjoy all the things he said about them. "He resented being called 'Sir Stafford Cripps'. But I didn't know that that word had a connection with the rear. I don't have to descend to four-letter words to be abusive". Brendan demurred. Churchill replied: "Come off it, Brendan, you've also had bad luck with that word. You once called someone 'crapular' and he resented it."

Mr Beaton, however, is best with his own sort of people, as in his portrait of Lady Alexander, the widow of the actor-manager, an *amer-pigment* combination of malice and sympathy, expressed as usual in visual terms.

Although of an alarming vintage she took Reggie and me to benefit performances, charity balls, first nights, and all sorts of public places. When we first saw her she presented a strange spectacle with her pig's snout, dog's mouth and bird's eyes, wearing the most exaggerated of clothes and feathered head-gear. Even in broad daylight she appeared to be in full fancy rig; yet we dared not laugh at her for she was a kind, good soul with a golden heart. Someone said she looked like a caricature of an old marquise, but she always reminded us of some circus dog dressed up—a white poodle covered in frills and diamonds.

Working with Korda was not happiness unalloyed. Admiration for the producer's charm, culture and intelligence was tempered by alarm at his inability to do several things at once or any of them as well as possible. But it brought much-needed money and made it possible to purchase Reddish House, Broadchalke, in place of Ashcombe, of which he was dispossessed after fourteen years of devotion. Life and career move steadily forward during the quadrennium.

Yet in this volume one relationship usurps an importance out of proportion to that which it will probably assume when the diaries come to be regarded as a whole: the love-affair between the most celebrated photographer of beautiful women of his generation and the most beautiful woman of hers. In a prefatory note, Mr Beaton explains:

Some who appear in this volume may consider that things that were said, or happened, twenty years ago are still not sufficiently a part of history to be worth writing. If I have offended any friends I hope they will believe that it was far from my wish to do so. I want of all have I wanted to cause any pain to the woman who occupied my thoughts (and the bulk of my diary entries) in the years just after the war. I have tried to remain truthful, and I hope to omit the central character from this present volume. It would cause a complete hiatus, and denigrate a relationship that was, for ten years, meaningful and pertinent, and reduce it to the level of an episode. Moreover, it would not be natural or justifiable to myself—and still less to her—if I omitted my recollections of this remarkable person.

The date of this slightly cryptic note is 1968, which possibly infers that Mr Beaton delayed publication until he received Greta Garbo's *imprimatur*. If this was so, the reader can feel no embarrassment on Miss Garbo's behalf at the

revelation of Mr Beaton's intimate friendship with a woman who at that time was the victim of an almost paranoid fear of exposure: but correspondingly he found perhaps especially she cannot help speculating about the reasons for such a reversal of attitude.

In the long run, however, this love story (telling in this volume with a middle-aged crackpot) to use Mr Beaton's self-description, "convulsed with sob's") will be judged not by whether it is in good taste to publish at such a time but whether it is worth publishing at all, or in part. Most readers will be more concerned with the behaviour of Miss Garbo than that of Mr Beaton. There has probably been no woman ever whose cinematic image is so adorably recognized and whose personality remains so elusive. As an actress, she may not rate supreme, but as a star she outshines all. "Beauty like hers is genius", as Mr Beaton observes in the words of Rossetti. Because this to most of us is not enough, we are avid to know more.

We shall not find it in Mr Beaton's pages. In company with him, we intrude into the presence. We watch, we admire, we are tantalized. The beauty, the down-to-earthness, the reputation of gossip, the not-caring-how-one-looks with the uner-

ring-sense-of-looking-right, the sadness and the gaiety, the tender advance and the baffling retreat, the depression and indecisions, the head-colds and big feet, the simple meals and bottles of vodka, the social charm and subsequent boredom baffle, bewilder and bemuse Mr Beaton in his private contacts as surely as they have her screen fans in films, which except for a handful are unworthy of her majesty. Her screen quality is mystery, the mystery of light and wind upon a lake, ever-changing, ever-lovely, ever-surprising. But what is there to be seen by the diver? Is it all a natural phenomenon, the effect on the retina of light and air and water? Perhaps this was why Miss Garbo gave her *imprimatur*. Mr Beaton tells us little about her which we did not know already, except that she works like a peasant in her Hollywood garden, digging in loads of manure and saving down ivy.

Mr Beaton, with his Korda contacts, tried to plan careers together, but Greta Garbo could not abandon stardom for team drama. *La Divina* was still Queen of the Screen, while she remained not entirely *incognita* as "Miss Brown" at the Ritz Hotel, New York City, and 904 Bedford Drive, Beverly Hills.

Mr Beaton persisted in his efforts to entice her into his future:

Doggedly I expounded on the possibilities of what we could make of a life together. We would add to each other's interests and activities, we would increase each other's enthusiasms. On a pragmatic level, the idea that she might produce a child, and could be in the course of their, perhaps rather ordinary, lives, might prove to be a thing that had happened. No, she could never undertake the responsibility of having a child. I had one, she would "behead it", I was rather shocked at her joke.

Miss Garbo, one feels, was even more shocked that she might ever become Mrs Cecil Beaton of Reddish House, Broadchalke, and Pelham Place, South Kensington. What had happened had been wonderful. But even during the time, *Vogue*, Korda, Covent Garden or Cond   Nast had taken over, the fantastic excitement of life as wife of a man in the prime of his creative life may for a moment have tempted this goddess of the screen. But was there in any of the myths of ancient Greece an instance of a god or goddess becoming mortal for a lover? It was, surely always the other way round. And Mr Beaton never proposed spending the rest of his life buying "manure for 904 Bedford Drive or health foods for the Ritz Hotel.

performer, genuine primitive or showman's exhibit? In his introduction C. H. Rolph hopes that Mr Norman's work will make for more tolerance in a public at present undergoing a hardening of the penal attitudes. Whether or not he does any good there, his surviving value must be that of a writer who takes his work seriously and whose natural vitality dies hard, even though he is committed—doomed, some might prefer to put it—to a progressive refinement of his style. He had no intention of becoming a literary lion: "It just happened to me." And in *The Grass Widows*, written at the height of his influence, he tells us that he had by that time "completely forgotten what the inside of a nick looks like". It is a sad note, almost with a hint of self-innocence.

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From lag to lion

FRANK NORMAN:
The Lives of Frank Norman
Introduction by C. H. Rolph.
318pp. Penguin. Paperback, 45p.

"It would have been a miracle if my biography had not improved somewhat after a decade of solid writing". Frank Norman comments in a note on *Banana Boy*, the fourth of his autobiographical books. It is not as enticing a sentence as some he has written, and there are those of his readers who would have preferred the miracle to happen. Yet it would be just as sentimental to assume that a man can move from old lag to literary lion without a certain loss of naturalness and verve, as it would be affected on Mr Norman's own part to stick to thieves' jargon and rhyming slang when the martini trays are circulating. A celebrity must retain what honesty he can, and on the evidence of *The Lives of Frank Norman* the lionized ex-convict does very well.

This attractive paperback consists of substantial extracts from the four legs of autobiography which really march backwards. *Banana Boy*, the latest to be written, is about Mr Norman's days as a Dr Barnardo's school-boy and naturally comes first. "I dismissed all he had to say as utter rot", is the way he describes his headmaster's warning. The book that takes its place towards the end though written a decade earlier. "But I cocked a deaf ear to that" is the equivalent reaction to some advice he receives on leaving prison. The effects of the literary life are plain to see, though the inhibitions he acquires are of style rather than subject-matter. Between the two comes *Stand on Me*, about his days as a Soho hunger-on and described by Mr Norman as "a more conscious effort at writing" than the racy prison book which launched him.

Where does he stand—reformer or

ACTION

Partitioned off

WILLIAM TREVOR:
The Ballroom of Romance and other stories
Boley Head. £2.25.
NADINE GORDIMER:
The Piano Lesson
Cape. £1.95.

William Trevor's characters are not sudden victims of a cruel fate, but irretrievably sad, as if they were suffering from a mild, incurable illness. The condition, for which Mrs Trevor's characters have drifted that way, or are certain to become that way, is a natural inclination. Their sadness is not the masochistic bravura of the penitent's hair-shirt, nor is it a dramatic and climactic. Rather, one of a history of small, formative appointments and betrayals; and of a future which will lead, inevitably, to hopelessness. The overwhelming passion, the tragedy that a person waste are things that people Mr Trevor's characters suffer from their lives and will eventually leave them utterly vulnerable.

Three of the stories in *The Ballroom of Romance*, "The Mark-2 War", "The Grass Widows" and "O Fat White Woman", have already proved successful as television plays, and they are certainly among the best in the book, though it is possibly invidious to single them out from a collection that is never disappointing. The domestic scene is one which Mr Trevor associates with a particularly keen sense of time, when half a lifetime of life is seen in a single moment of reflection or circumstance and can no longer be a defence. In "The Grass Widows" a head-teacher and his wife leave their usual holiday hotel to discover that the place is now run by the former owner's son and has changed beyond all recognition. The scene has been clumsily halved by a wall of partitions, the food is appalling, the service worse. They discover that a former head-boy has married his bride, assuming the name of his former headmaster and his wife can hear the chatter, unsuccessful attempts of the younger couple as they try to consummate their marriage. At breakfast the two men take up their former relationship with ease: the headmaster, avuncular and comfortably pompous; the pupil, sycophantic and snivelling. Mrs Angusthorpe recognizes the headmaster whose authoritarianism and selfishness she has endured for years of their marriage. Shocked into action, she attempts to persuade Daphne Jackson to abandon her husband before habit takes an unbreakable hold; but just as it is too late for her to make a change, so the pattern of Daphne Jackson's life has already become unchangeable.

Mrs Angusthorpe's bid for some kind of vicarious freedom peters out in apologies and unspoken regret. Mrs Digby-Hunter, in "O Fat White Woman", has needed a self-deception on top of her to protect herself from the varieties of failure her marriage has gone through, and for that reason her awakening is more traumatic and less easily suppressed. She is the wife of a head-teacher, a man who runs a private boarding school where boys who have failed to gain entrance to public school undergo cramming methods which would have been more appropriate to a Gestapo cell. It takes the death of one of the pupils to push Mrs Digby-Hunter into a realization of her husband's true nature and of the barrenness of her life with him. A sense, though, her tragedy, like that of Mrs Angusthorpe, is not that she admitted it too late but that she was enough to admit it at all. Those who are enough to change their lives escape the disillusionment to their advantage. For those who remain too

weak to change it is an unbearable burden.

This point is made repeatedly in *The Ballroom of Romance*. A spinster dreams of leaving her parents, knowing she will never be able to summon enough courage to make the break: a girl, tied by pity to her invalid father, makes a weekly trip to a village dance hall and nurses memories of an old romance while failing even to snare the man she is willing to settle for: a boy escapes a dull town and the certainty of a dull future only in daydreams; and the situation is given a neat twist in "Access to the Children", a story in which a man who has left his wife for another woman is left, in turn, by his lover and finds that there is no way back into the comfort and security of the marriage he abandoned.

The stories may be sad, but they have about them the unmistakable ring of truth. Mr Trevor never once forces the pace, never once pushes events into an unlikely pattern. Instead, he brings his characters to life by endowing them with the small, cumulative regrets which together make the sum of their unhappiness, providing a sense of their experience and their isolation with a skill which is all the more impressive for being unobtrusive.

Nadine Gordimer, too, makes a point well by not stating it directly. South Africa is her home, and is the setting for many of her stories, but even when she is making use of politics in a story she is never guilty of pushing her characters to the sideline in order to make an overt political point. A fact which, paradoxically, enables her to demonstrate South Africa's political oddities more exactly: the country lives through the characters' experience of it. "Abroad" is a story in which a man leaves South Africa and travels up to Zambia where his sons are living. He is prepared to discover changes in his sons; he is prepared, too, for the

strangeness of a country where the African is in control; no segregation, no automatic precedence for Whites. To begin with, he is able to cope, countering his younger son's indifference with a brash good humour, declaring himself impressed by the sophistication of the Africans he meets, and even agreeing to share a hotel room with an Indian. Finally, though, the adjustments prove too much; his good will is false just as his expectations of a grand reunion with his sons was something he desired but never, one senses, really expected to achieve.

The subtlety which enables Miss Gordimer to produce a sense of her country's complexities through the lives of her characters extends to those stories in which the setting is less significant. She seldom, if ever, passes judgment or breaks into the narrative to make some observation that might have escaped the reader's notice; instead, she lets the characters work for her, implying but never stating, so that the progression of the story—its power and its chance of success—lies in her ability to manipulate and develop her characters rather than a tendency to back them with little informative statements about their motives or desires. A good example of this is "The Bride of Christ", in which a pair of liberal parents do the fair-minded thing in allowing their daughter to become confirmed. They have all the right arguments with which to oppose it, they even understand what lies behind it, but they are powerless in the face of her commitment to Christianity because it lacks the logic by which they live. The girl's eventual lapse in favour of more pressing adolescent enthusiasms confuses them even more, and their po-faced bewilderment is, by turns, amusing and pitiful. Their confusion and mild unhappiness is typical of the book's mood, and the skill by which it is reached is typical too.

Effort in exile

ADAM FERGUSON:
The Last Embassy
286pp. Collins. £2.

JEREMY LELAND:
The Tower
191pp. Gollancz. £1.90.

The Princess Sarossy of Carpathia once put a handful of rose petals into a walnut box inlaid with a silver initial and crown, given to her by her lover, Count Miklos Bandera. Fifty years later the box, still smelling of roses, comes into the hands of a London antique dealer, John Orr, who with his friend Samuel Wyndham becomes involved in the fortunes of the Sarossys. Though Carpathia has long since been consumed by Soviet Russia, Prince Paul Sarossy is still at his post as Ambassador, presiding over the Carpathian government in exile, robbing himself every day to meet the summons to Buckingham Palace that never comes, and selling off piece by piece the embassy paintings and furniture. The two Englishmen are persuaded to undertake a mission to Carpathia, where a revolt led by Katarina, grand-daughter of the Princess and Count Bandera is about to begin. Wyndham falls instantly in love with Katarina, and after the outbreak of the revolt and a skirmish with the Russian tanks, all three escape on a plane to London.

The story slides between the past and present, now pursuing the Princess's affair with her husband's friend soon after the First World War, now following the Englishmen's efforts to help the Sarossys grown old. It is stylishly done, completely confident, and issues like a latter-day Anthony Hope with music by Ivor Novello. One aspect, however, jars very badly. A worthy but unsympathetic character called Kora immolates herself before the Russians, allowing Katarina to escape. Jan Palach and 1969 are rather glibly invoked, as though the

author preferred the high polish and soft centre of his work to real and painful events, while leaning on those events to substantiate his tale.

There is at first something oddly irritating about the prose of *The Tower*: after a while you realize that what is catching at your mind is that you are really having to pay attention. Quite large slabs of quite good books seem to write themselves, and to read themselves, too, as they mechanically cover the neutral ground between their interesting bits. The writing here is thick with observation and ideas, mildly cranky in its style, and used to make the reader keenly interested in the goings-on of a pleasant but slightly silly girl called Andrea.

Her self-absorbed lover Ben lives in an Irish Norman tower, and has no intention of leaving it for her. When he chucks her, she marries a mother-dominated solicitor called Arnold who has been mooning after her for years. She spends a few disastrous months with him until he goes home to mother, and she ends "a separated married woman of twenty-four, and pregnant". Ben, who has been meanwhile in the Middle East, has smuggled an Arab girl terrorist into Ireland and his tower, and let her die of a trivial infection rather than risk her discovery by the authorities. The bliss he has shared with her counterpoints Andrea's misery with Arnold, both are over, and still Andrea loves Ben in vain.

The author's imaginative hold on his central character is so strong that he makes her follies seem inevitable, and not a novelist's arrangements. With a sort of unkind sympathy he conveys her reverence for her dead father, which sustains her but justly marks everyone else. He understands the baffled sexuality that would make a young woman like Andrea turn to someone as wet as Arnold. Going deeper, he explores the unappealing bitterness of knowing that one's "proper person" is unsuitable as well as lost.

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£6.75 illus.

Suicide of a magazine

OTTO FRIEDRICH:
Decline and Fall
499pp. Michael Joseph. £5.

LOUIS L. LYONS:
Newspaper Story
482pp. Harvard University Press.
London: Oxford University Press.
£4.75.

The sub-title of *Decline and Fall* is "The Struggle for Power in a Great American Magazine". The magazine was *The Saturday Evening Post*. Otto Friedrich was the foreign editor, articles editor and finally managing editor. Naturally his main interest

is the intra-office chicanery, double-dealing and plain stupidity which contributed to the death of the *Post* in 1969.

Mr Friedrich tells the story well with abundant quotations from the old cast of characters who attended the patient in the last years. There is, perhaps, too much detail. Worse, there is a tendency to concentrate so deeply on the whys and wherefores of the *Post's* collapse that the reader is diverted from the fact that Mr Friedrich's subject was a giant in American journalism and its end a loss to the nation.

The *Post*, in its last phase, committed some outrageous errors. Much of its copy, despite extensive and expensive advertising, was pretty thin stuff. Its editors were prone to chase every journalistic novelty, including that shocking redundancy, "investigative journalism". What else is good journalism but investigative? During much of this period the *Post* was an easy mark for snide gibes from the left and, in truth, its editorial policy for many years remained a bit to the right of Louis XIV.

Yet this was a magazine that published William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, P. G. Wodehouse, Ring Lardner and Edith Wharton. At a time when few Americans, and certainly very few *Post* readers in what is now called middle America, cared much about events abroad, the *Post* offered them intelligent articles on events around the world. When the *Post* died and its parent company, the Curtis Publishing Company,

went into eclipse, something important went out of American life.

What killed the *Post*? The news and picture magazines it tried to imitate without quite succeeding? Television? All had a hand in the magazine's demise. But there are some around the newsrooms of New York and Chicago who believe that the *Post* began to flounder in September, 1961, when it went through a disastrous revamping, what Mr Friedrich calls a peculiar mixture of new and old and what Clay Blair, another editor, later described as "utter, total, complete disaster". That December the Curtis Company announced losses of \$4m. At the end of the 1920s advertising revenue alone had been more than \$50m a year.

From that point on, with one brief rally in 1966, it was all downhill. The answer must be that the *Post*, helped of course by television, killed itself by discarding a proven formula for material that appealed to its bright young men in its offices but said nothing to *Post* readers.

Mr Friedrich's descriptions of his colleagues are far from flattering, and the processes by which the *Post* was edited are almost unbelievable. There is a curious amateurism about the proceedings. Listen to Martin Ackerman, the *Post's* last president but one discussing the means of saving the paper. Asked to spell out his ideas Ackerman said:

Okay, here's the deal. Is somebody taking notes? We get out of the numbers game with *Life* and *Look*—we're not getting anywhere that way, and it's losing us money—and we cut back the

Post from six point eight million (circulation) to three million, and we make it a high-class magazine for a class audience.

Students of the economics of publishing will note that in its death throes the *Post* still had a circulation of nearly seven million. Students of literature will not miss the *Through the Looking Glass* aspects of what Mr Ackerman was saying.

Mr Friedrich has a sharp eye and attentive ear for the absurdities of corporate life: his accounts of office squabbles and salesmen's meetings ring true. But despite the occasional comedy, this is a sad book. Something necessary to American life was being slowly killed, and if the incompetents who presided showed any sign of feeling for that life or, indeed, for their readers, Mr Friedrich does not emphasize it.

Louis Lyons's story of the *Boston Globe* is in happier vein. He tells the story of that newspaper's life and times, its great stories, its scoops, its campaigns. The *Globe* does not have the acclaim it deserves in the United States; that goes to *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. But it is a solid, professional newspaper published in a city as full of life as any reporter could wish. Boston's transatlantic reputation for dullness is undeserved. It is a lively town and the *Globe* a lively newspaper.

Mr Lyons was a reporter on the *Globe* from 1919 to 1946 and later Curator of the Nieman Fellowships at Harvard until 1964. His long connection with the newspaper and the almost papal position he held in journalism resulting from his job

at Harvard may be responsible for the small defects of *Newspaper Story*. As in most institutional histories, there is too much detail. Does anyone really care how the *Globe* covered Lily Langtry's Boston debut? And Mr Lyons often is too Olympian in his judgments. The years in the rarified atmosphere of Harvard may have led him to forget that journalism can be drudgery and luck as well as enterprise and high thinking.

One of Mr Lyons's great coups as a reporter was an interview with Joseph P. Kennedy, then Ambassador to the Court of St James, in 1940. He tells the story with verve and insight. This was the interview in which Mr Kennedy said it was "bunk" to believe that England was "fighting for democracy", and appealed to his countrymen to keep out of the war and keep the sphere out of it. If any of the Latin Americans act up, kick them in the teeth. These and other statesmanlike remarks precipitated Mr Kennedy's resignation. Mr Lyons writes: "He'd been a Chamberlain man and could hardly represent Roosevelt to Churchill."

To repeat, Boston is a lively city and the *Globe's* reporting on Boston stories and people makes good reading; the Sacco-Vanzetti case, various members of the Kennedy family from Joseph P. to Teddy, the bazaar Mayor Curley and the Lizzie Borden case. Mr Lyons tells the story of the newspaper's triumphs and trials with skill and good humour. But it is a family story, a Boston story.

POLITICS

Robert Kee's account of the fortunes of Irish nationalism starts with the events leading up to the rebellion of 1798 and ends with the civil war that greeted the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922. He has a backward glance at the direction of Sinn Féin and the generation of Ireland by Norman Connaught. When the French Directory finally got an expedition on to Irish soil at Killala its leader, General Humbert, had been led to expect by the sanguine reports of Irish intermediaries that the inhabitants would flock to the standard of revolt in an organized manner as soon as he raised it by his presence. Nothing of the sort occurred. After spending sixteen days in Connaught, during which he equipped and marshalled some thousands of raw peasants and achieved a notable victory for French arms at Castlebar, he was outmanoeuvred by Lord Cornwallis and surrendered his forces.

As if from the pages of one of the exploits of Brigadier Gerard, he and his men were treated with the utmost consideration by their English captors, being entertained to a banquet in Dublin before being sent to England whence they were quickly returned to France. The wretched Irish who services he had accepted were left behind to be slaughtered or subjected to the particular brutalities of those times. Humbert had no very good opinion of them, as he confided to an officer of his escort, complaining that he had hardly landed before they relieved him of £50 and his watch.

In another episode of which Mr Kee captures the full flavour we encounter the Old Harrovian revolutionary William Smith O'Brien circulating round the towns and villages of Munster in what appeared to be a daze, uncertain whether or even

Fighting for Ireland

ROBERT KEE:
The Green Flag
877pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£5.95.

how to start the insurrection into which he was pushed by his own and his associates' literary enthusiasm. He was captured on the platform of the railway station at Thurles:

He was wearing a black hat, a blue coat and light plaid trousers at the time, and he had just bought himself a second-class railway ticket and forgotten to collect his sixpence change.

The Green Flag is narrative history. Mr Kee is not concerned to provide an analysis of nationalism or a theory of revolution. Two themes, if they can be called that, do however run through the book. One is the muddying of Irish nationalism in its political form by the fact that the system, the apparatus, and the personnel against which the patriots fumed, plotted, and occasionally erupted were themselves predominantly Irish. The militia of '98, the landlords and middlemen in the nineteenth century, the Royal Irish Constabulary always. The point is well illustrated again in connexion with William Smith O'Brien. While tentatively calling his countrymen to arms, he with two companions entered the police station at Mullinahone in County Tipperary and called upon the constables to surrender their arms. He wanted to prove his point that the police were as good Irishmen as any. According to evidence given afterwards in court the head constable replied: "I would be unworthy of the name of Irishman if I gave up my arms." Mr Kee comments:

And though O'Brien, who is probably more reliable, stated that the constable

had by no means been so firm as he later pretended, the fact that this was at least thought to be the right answer to give is significant. O'Brien, like other Irish nationalists before and after, was up against the awkward fact that Irish nationalism was not the clear-cut cause he made it out to be.

It was not, Mr Kee argues, until the last throes of the "war of independence" of 1919-21, when the expansion of the RIC and resignations from it were met by Black and Tans and Auxiliaries from England, that the air was really cleared. Something like a formal state of war had come about, the British army and the police thus augmented and partly anglicized against the flying columns of the IRA.

The old fantasy proclaimed since the days of Strongbow that the Irish were fighting England for their freedom at last became a sort of reality. The Republicans had drawn the Irish people into their view of history.

Another theme that runs through the book is that the engine of Irish nationalism was social grievance, notably the appalling system of landlord tenure, not a longing for political freedom or hatred of an alien system of government, though both those factors were of course generally present.

Mr Kee relates that Thomas Emmet, one of the defeated United Irishmen of '98, when examined before the House of Lords in Dublin, was asked by the Speaker whether it were not true of the common people who had risen that "the object next their hearts was a separation and a republic". Emmet replied: "Pardon me, the object next their hearts was a redress of their grievances." And he said that, if such an object could be accom-

plished peaceably, "they would prefer it infinitely to a revolution and a republic".

The inspiration for that rebellion came from political radicals, many of them Protestant Dissenters, conspiring in a way that resembled the activity of Jacobin clubs in England at the same time. But the sinews of the rebellion were the Defenders, a loose and localized organization which had come into being quite independently and for another purpose—agrarian self-defence. The imperfect coordination of the two elements was one reason for the failure of the rebellion.

And so it was with each generation's nationalist outburst during the nineteenth century. While the activists strove to awaken a national consciousness and to win freedom and varying degrees of independence for their country, the people whom they had to rouse if they were going to accomplish anything were looking only for relief from the miserable conditions of their lives.

Having firmly established the thesis that political nationalism in that century approached effectiveness only when its leaders—notably O'Connell and Parnell—were able to swing behind them the social grievances of the common people of Ireland, it remained for Mr Kee to explain how it was that the provisional triumph of Irish nationalism (1916-21) came when the social grievances of the Irish had been very largely removed by a succession of Acts regulating relations between landlord and tenant and enabling tenants to purchase their agricultural holdings. That he does in the longest and most detailed section of the book.

Nationalism, once its credentials are established, is nowadays accorded full rights at the bar of international opinion. Those who come forward as its champions receive moral approval and may receive material assistance. Those who are seen to be thwarting its fulfilment are condemned. It is therefore of more than historical importance to know whether there is for the island of Ireland one stream of legitimate

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HEINZ-DIETRICH FISCHER:
Parteien und Presse in Deutschland seit 1945

598pp. Bremen: Schöningh-Universitätsverlag. DM 48.

ECKART SPOO (Editor):
Die Tabus der bundesdeutschen Presse

136pp. Munich: Hanser. DM 7.80.

AXEL SPRINGER:
Von Berlin aus gesehen
Zeugnisse eines engagierten Deutschen.

Edited by Hans Wallenberg.
300pp. Stuttgart: Seewald. DM 26.

Freedom of the press and newspaper monopolies are emotive subjects in every democracy. They are debated in parliaments, in universities, and by the general public, in the hope that whatever freedom exists may be preserved, and that what is as yet available only in restricted measure may be extended. They are matters of passionate interest throughout the world. Among Western countries it is probably the Federal Republic in which they have come to have the greatest importance, because it was here that the four Occupation Powers gave Germany the opportunity to develop such freedoms during the immediate postwar years. As was only natural, every political party, and the Social Democratic Party in particular, hoped to develop its own party-political press. The Social Democrats planned to start again from the point they had reached before the Hitler period. There was the only party that had the necessary organizational at its disposal; and, since its headquarters were in the British zone, it was able to approach the occupying power without undue delay. The centre parties, the CDU and the FDP, and of course the Communists too, all strove to secure the powerful weapon that would be given them by the establishment of their own party newspapers.

Heinz-Dietrich Fischer, in his well-reasoned and comprehensive *Parteien und Presse in Deutschland seit 1945*, discusses developments up to 1970. The book is fully annotated and will be indispensable to any

library or institution concerned with the press, and indeed with any of the communications media. It should well repay careful study. It shows why, despite very real goodwill, neither the occupying powers nor the political parties succeeded in establishing a strong party-political press. Reading habits as well as the media themselves have changed greatly during the past thirty years, and nowadays there is no real demand for purely party-orientated papers. This is one main reason for the success of the Springer press. Although evidencing a strong political bias, they have yielded to modern trends—gossip, sex and crime—and are therefore accepted by a wide cross-section of the public, covering all political parties. Springer's daily *Bild* is the most typical example, but the same is true of local papers such as the *Köln Express* and the *fz* in Munich.

Die Tabus der bundesdeutschen Presse is a collection of articles by more or less controversially-minded West German journalists, who discussed the subject of "taboos" at a conference called by the Union of German Journalists and the German Writers' Association. It is interesting that the conference itself fell a prey to one of the taboos and was hardly mentioned in any newspaper. Some young research students and writers carried out a survey and came to the conclusion that certain subjects are either never mentioned at all or only in a distorted form; and this not only in the tendentious Springer press but also in more liberal papers. Whether in articles on economic and domestic affairs or on matters of foreign policy, the influence of potential advertisers, politicians, pressure-groups of all sorts, is discernible over and over again.

Such taboos no doubt operate in other countries too. But a comparison of reports published in the Federal Republic and, for example, in Great Britain will show that facts and opinions are there not kept as strictly separate as in this country. A large number of local or provincial papers in Germany are family concerns: they are administered and directed by members of these families. They reflect the political approach and outlook of their

owners, and editorial staffs are chosen accordingly. These newspapers—especially the provincial ones—are in many cases dependent upon local advertisers, and this colours editorial comment. It may be that the difficulties will be resolved as the trend towards concentration and cooperation spreads and private companies expand to wider ownership.

Since the end of the war only a single business among newspaper publishers has achieved actual monopoly status in the Federal Republic, a position with which no one can hope to compete nowadays, and which is unique in the Western world: the Springer press. This fact must be borne in mind when reading the sole proprietor's *Von Berlin aus gesehen*. The book consists of a collection of lectures and articles published during the past five years or so. Axel Springer might be regarded as the last surviving veteran of the Cold War, particularly in considering passages such as the following:

"This is no time for rejoicing," said Willy Brandt as he prepared to sign the Warsaw Pact. Was the Federal Chancellor hoping to rectify an unfortunate remark made by his Foreign Secretary, Walter Scheel, who, on the day when he initiated the agreement whereby Germany was dismembered and 25 per

cent of her territory was 'expatriated' said that he was 'Very happy'?

The "Onpolitik" of the Bonn nation is based upon the assumption that the Communist bloc is invulnerable, its political organization makes it immune from natural changes—a kind of pessimism that ignores the fact that only appear to be immortal. It should be obvious in Germany of places. It was faith in this fact helped the German people and the responsible political leaders to resist the temptation to allow their future to be determined by the forces of violence.

It is for this reason that people are shocked by Walter Scheel's "piousness", and who passionately want Willy Brandt's signature of the Warsaw Pact, must not be regarded as wing extremists. They represent a point of view shared by all democratic Parties in the Federal Republic by their constituents, until it shattered without rhyme or reason this Government.

On this point the Brandt Government gave Germany an impetus, fresh direction and, in conjunction with moves towards reform recent years, decisively changed the political atmosphere. Readers of book will easily differentiate between the two approaches if I remember what an immensely powerful instrument Springer can for any attack on the new development.

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nationalism or two. Are the Protestant Irishmen who are thickly concentrated in the North-East corner of the province of Ulster to be thought of as a minority within the Irish nation who, whether from selfishness, fear, or religious in-breeding, have systematically frustrated the full realization of Irish nationalism? Or are they to be thought of as being in possession of a separate nationalism of their own which, even if "nationalism" is not exactly the right word for it, is marked by an authentic collective identity and focus of loyalty which entitle it to no less consideration than the sentiment to the south of it?

If the answer to the second question is yes, then the Ulster Unionists deserve some support in their settled determination not to be absorbed into an all-Ireland republic, and the consequences of coercing them into that position can be confidently predicted as disastrous. If the answer to the question is no, then it becomes a sensible object of policy, in the interests of Ulster Protestants themselves as much as in those of anyone else, to do whatever can be done to condition them to acceptance of their historical lot. And the answer to the question is certainly not to be found by simple inspection of the map—

"Ah yes, a smallish island of convenient shape. Obviously one nation." Nationality has more, to do with people than with territory. The Green Flag illuminates the question, but it is not one Mr Kee himself directly raises, or perhaps would even admit. Much of the historical information that is relevant to the question is omitted or only lightly touched on: the nature of the plantation of Ulster in the seventeenth century; the close commerce between that corner of Ireland and Scotland, which began long before the plantation; the origins and development of Orange organization, which does not receive the same

attention as Irish nationalism proper; the causes and significance of Ulster's relative prosperity under the Union; the positive values for which Ulster Protestants have conceived themselves to be standing.

Mr Kee does, however, bring out clearly the gap that existed through-

they were all Irishmen together—and there shall be neither Protestant nor Catholic: "We want all creeds and classes in Ireland," Parnell said. "We cannot consent to look upon a single Irishman as not belonging to us." And of course the leadership of successive nationalist movements was

describes. The year 1795, when Belfast radical Dissenters were providing some of the stuffing for the United Irishmen, a movement officially dedicated to non-sectarian patriotism, that year actually saw the beginnings of the Orange organization—formed to beat off the agrarian

the Catholic peasants of Mayo prepared to greet their deliverance exactly the opposite way to that intended, associating them for reasons with Northern Protestants believing that they were come to them from their homes. When the Boycott in 1880 was organized from the Land League the Orange which presented his name to the League, fifty Orangemen came to the harvest. Earlier, at the time of the Young Ireland rising, government money was passed to the Orange Master of the Orange Lodge to enable Orangemen to equip themselves with arms. Their response to Liberal Home Rule needs no emphasis.

Some explanation is required of the fact that the Ulster Protestants alone of the invaders, planters, and settlers of Ireland have not been drawn into the mainstream of Irishness. Are they a peculiarly calcitrant national minority, or are they extra-national? John Redmond said: "Irish nationalists can be as assenting parties to the partition of the Irish nation; Ireland a unit... the two nation theory to us an abomination and a blasphemy." Strong epithets, however, do not settle the question of the theory's truth. Nor is its truth settled by the superior attraction for the cultivated mind of the winding canon of Irish nationalism with its poets, assassins, scholars, and puts, parlor revolutionaries, and bugs, mythopoeic essayists, and orators, emerging from so long a great suffering of the people to put an almost mystic quality to their often futile and often bloody deeds—the superior attraction that to the hard, assertive, successful self-reliance of the Protestant which has about it a poetical imagination as is contained in a bowler hat.

challenge of the (Catholic) Defenders. The Governor of Armagh complained that "nothing can exceed the animosity between Protestant and Catholic at this moment in this country." A little later when a French fleet lay storm-bound in Bantry Bay



The massacre of Irish loyalists on Wexford bridge, 1798 (Mary Evans Picture Library)

out his period between the theory of Irish nationalism as propounded by Wolfe Tone, or Thomas Davis, or Parnell, or Redmond, and what actually happened whenever nationalism took the field. The theory, patline in its comprehensiveness, was that

studded with Protestants, including Presbyterians from Ulster. But when it came down to it, the Protestants of Ulster were as a community persistently unsympathetic or actively hostile to the nationalist manifestations which Mr Kee

have these movements responded, and in what conditions, and with how much real reference to European and Asian examples? To what extent has material aid from communist sources to be seen as merely contingent to the application of indigenous policy, especially in the absence of any other sources of material aid?

On all such questions, and the evidence for weighing them, *African Liberation Movements* tells little more than one can learn from a diligent review of handouts, communiqués and newspaper reports. Because of its selectivity, moreover, it often tells less. It leads one through the names and labels as though these had some final value in themselves, leaving aside the large probability that they often represent the manoeuvres of an inevitable opportunism or the chimera of their antagonists' propaganda. But surely we are past the point where any such approach has value. It is rather like pigeonholing President Nyerere and his regime as "pro-Peking" because the Chinese are building a railway through Tanzania. They may be "pro-Peking", the railway being a very useful thing and no one else prepared to build it: but how far

are they "pro-Peking", and in what actual sense, and with what intentions and intentions? And one not also listen to what the protagonists themselves say upon subject, and watch what they do?

Mr Gibson has little time for such listening and watching, though the "liberation movements" have produced several spokesmen of outstanding intellectual power, have done much to put their into effect. Displaying the indifference of those who know, he sweeps through the "liberation movements" with a trite certainty which appears to know that these Africans cannot have minds of their own. Consequently the greater part of it is missing: all that part in which, one expects to read of evolution of thought and the development of possibilities. There is a monumental lack of energy in an attempt to grasp the condition in all its complexity, a comparable lack of experience in the field. Mr Gibson harps a great deal on his of bias. Rather too often, in pages, it seems a mere acknowledgment.

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Secrets of Insula XIV

SHEPPARD FRERE and others:
Verulamium Excavations
Volume I
384pp plus 60 plates. Oxford University Press for the Society of Antiquaries. £12.

Of the major towns of Roman Britain, Verulamium, just to the west of St Albans, shares with Colchester (Silchester) and Viroconium (Wroxeter) the advantage, from the archaeological standpoint, of having been open and deserted from the fifth century to the present day. In this respect it represents a "diggers' paradise"; and the first modern large-scale excavations designed to plumb its secrets and write its history were those of Sir Mortimer and the late Mrs T. V. Wheeler in 1930-1935, followed by investigations of some special buildings and areas by Sir Mortimer and other experts between 1935 and 1949. Then in 1954 came the news that a great broad motorway was to replace the narrow country lane that ran north-south across the centre of the site. A rescue campaign was immediately planned and mounted and was carried out vigorously from 1955-1961 under the direction of Sheppard Frere, assisted by a large team of fellow-workers. The first volume of *Verulamium Excavations* presents, in Report No XXVII of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London (1972), some of the campaign's most valuable spoils.

Part I describes in detail the structures that came to light in Insula (that is, town-block) XIV along the south side of Watling Street, the Roman street that runs east-west across the city's northern part. The dedication of Volume I to the work in this area was a very wise choice. Not only has it yielded much new and particularly fascinating information about Verulamium's social and economic life from a few years after the Roman conquest to the fourth century, but it has also produced some highly interesting finds that are catalogued and reproduced in Part II of this book—objects of lead, bronze, lead, bone, jet, shale, stone, etc., objects of iron and glass, and quantities of well-dated pottery, the last a subject fundamental for chronology but regrettably neglected in previous Verulamium publications. Furthermore, this report provides a quite outstanding picture of what modern excavation technique is able to achieve—in this case the disentangling of no less than five successive periods of wattle-and-daub and timber structures and one final period of building in stone, all within an area of some 210 by 96 feet.

The earliest timber buildings on the site consisted of a row of contiguous, rectangular shops with a common roof, of which the ridge ran parallel to Watling Street, and a common colonnade or portico along the latter's frontage. The like had never been seen in Britain before, and it can hardly be other than the outcome of official Roman planning, executed probably by Roman army architects with timber drawn from army stockpiles. Such evidence for early official interest in Verulamium's development strongly suggests that Tacitus meant precisely what he said when he described the place as no mere tribal capital, but as a *municipium*, a Roman chartered town. The fact that these buildings were a structural unit implies a single owner, whether an immigrant Italian or a member of the local native gentry, who let out the individual shops, which were clearly metal-workers' premises, to free or even freedmen craftsmen. One would like to know where these craftsmen lived and kept their families; for the shops at this stage provide no traces of domestic life, of cooking or sleeping accommodation: their ovens and hearths were obviously used for working purposes and for warming the workers while at work.

The shops were burnt by Boudicca, and for fifteen years after her visitation this patently valuable site, close to the city's heart, lay derelict. One wonders why. But there seems to be no satisfactory answer yet. Then c. 75 the row was rebuilt, still with a continuous roof and portico implying single ownership; and the same is true of a second reconstruction sometime between 105 and 130. But in the third reconstruction, between 130 and 150, the continuous roof was abandoned and a series of individual blocks, with gaps between them and roofs at right-angles to the street, took its place. In one of the rooms of the block, well back from the street, there came to light two *aedulae* (domestic shrines) and traces of painted plaster. These changes clearly suggest that various independent owners had

replaced the single landlord. And have we also evidence here of domestic dwelling-rooms behind the shops, which were still those of metal-workers? And what, we should like to have been told, is the significance of the infant burials discovered in these quarters? In the final timber rebuilding, between c. 150 and 155/60, there is still more proof of the individual ownership of separate blocks and still more traces, in the shape of painted walls, suggestive of domestic residence.

Shortly after the middle of the second century a fire devastated this and other areas of the town; and it was only after more than 100 years that the shops of Insula XIV were rebuilt, this time in stone, c. 270, and then occupied well into the fourth century. Again, we wonder, why this lengthy gap? For Verulamium was by no means a social and economic desert during that period. Once more it was a case of individual shops and dwellings extending quite a long way back from the Watling Street frontage; and painted plaster and two mosaic figured panels of fourth-century date speak unmistakably of domestic life. But still the metal-workers held the field; and it was apparently as metal-fabricators that the most spectacular find of the region, namely an almost perfectly preserved bronze statuette of Venus of early to mid-imperial date, beautifully modelled, but consigned to a rubbish-box beneath some cellars, was obviously used for working purposes and for warming the workers while at work.

The book is equipped with 147 excellently clear plans and sets of drawings and with sixty half-tone plates. One just wonders why Figure 2, the plan of the central part of the town, was not orientated to match the overall plan, Figure 147, instead of the detailed plans of the site at its successive stages, which obviously need to show Watling Street below the buildings. Meanwhile, the second volume, with its publication of the new discoveries in other areas and its promised further demolition of a certain previously held, but unsubstantiated, theory of the city's history, will be awaited eagerly.

Secrets of the caves

HANS-GEORG BANDI and others:
The Art of the Stone Age
287pp. Methuen. £4.

This book is the second edition (1970) of an original published in Germany in 1960 and in this country a year later, which only in a sub-title discloses that it is limited to "rock art". It is therefore not a book on the total art of the Stone Age (however this old-fashioned phrase may be construed) and as a second edition appears only to have had eight (fifteen added to the bibliography, and ignores a decade's re-thinking of Upper Palaeolithic cave art. To be out of date is unfortunate in any archaeological publication, but in this particular field it is more than usually serious.

From the opening years of this century until his death in 1961, Henri Breuil dominated the study of Franco-Cantabrian Palaeolithic art, and by a natural extension, the later Spanish rock paintings and the much more recent examples in Africa. Coming at first as a tremendous and revolutionary contribution to our understanding of ancient man's artistic achievement, his work in later years not only moved from idiosyncrasy into eccentricity, but he himself became, especially in France, the "prehistoric Pope", a supreme authority inhibiting unorthodox thought. An obituarist, remarking that "even a whiff of infallibility is an intoxicating and ultimately toxic drug, especially when inhaled in an atmosphere of *chémotisme*", looked forward to

new generation of younger scholars tackling the problem afresh, and this in fact is what happened. Annette Laming-Emperaire in 1962, André Leroi-Gourhan in 1965, and Peter Ucko and André Rosenfield in 1967, to mention only three outstanding studies, have caused drastic reassessments in the past ten years, but in the work under review only Leroi-Gourhan's book is now in the bibliography, and the new ideas are not discussed.

The text consists of a series of essays of varying length and scope, on Upper Palaeolithic cave paintings and engravings; the post-glacial south-east Spanish art; Mesolithic rock engravings in Scandinavia and adjacent Russia; a "mobiliar art" (sixty pages) from 30,000 BC to modern Eskimos; rock carvings and paintings in the Maghreb and Sahel; rock art in South Africa, America, West New Guinea and Australia. It is not revealed how "Stone Age" is to be understood: many groups of rock art are the product of stone-using hunting and gathering communities, but if pastoralists and agriculturalists are included among the makers of some of the African works, why, for instance, is the art lavished by stone-using agriculturalists on collective tombs in Western Europe from the fourth millennium BC excluded?

In the section on Upper Palaeolithic art, naturally that to which most readers would turn with the greatest interest, we have the traditional account with what are by now becoming the almost-as-traditional

colour photographs, though these do at least release us from reliance on subjective copies transferred from irregular discoloured rock to smooth white paper. The authenticity of the Rouffignac paintings is said to be "conclusively established", though many have considerable reservations. The Trois Frères "sorcerer" is still with us, convincing in description and copy but far less so in fact: at Tuc d'Audoubert "two unique sculptures of bisons", "must undoubtedly have served a purpose in some fertility rites"; there were three clay figures and the two in question lie nearly a metre apart. Human representations are inadequately discussed, though of great interest—why do we not see the low-relief coloured sculpture of the snub-nosed man in a fur cloak from Angles-sur-Anglin, published (in colour) in 1949, or the elegant engraved human figures at Adlaura? In the glossary at the end of the book there are some definitions which read oddly today, not least in the taxonomy of fossil hominids.

When one comes to the sections dealing with the comparatively modern rock art of Africa and elsewhere, we encounter some frighteningly naive archaeological and anthropological thinking about "magic" and "prehistory" in the living present, as links between this art and that of late-glacial Europe, and once again we wonder what unifying factor was thought to underlie this assemblage of the rock art of such diverse cultural traditions and

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Fighting for majority rule

RICHARD GIBSON:

African Liberation Movements

350pp. Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations. £3.50.

The grim onward plod of southern Africa's peoples towards an ever-deepening strife, as the violence of minority rule finds answer in counter-violence by majorities, or at least by sections of the latter, is a subject whose drama has begun to draw a wide attention. Several useful studies of this or that aspect have appeared lately, as well as less useful flights of rhetorical rhetoric deriving from "guerrilla adventures". But, although the documentary evidence from many sides is now voluminous, there is as yet no satisfactory survey.

What should "satisfactory" mean? In this emotive context? The great desideratum, it would seem, is that any such survey should make and present its analysis within the context of a given history: its objectivity, in short, will be measured by its ability to trace the movement of indigenous thought and action within the limits of what is shown to be, or to have

been, the historically possible. For what is interesting about "contemporary struggles against white minority rule" is not that they are "contemporary" or that they are "struggles": resistance to white minority rule is as old as that kind of rule's inception.

What is interesting about these struggles is the extent to which they reflect new ideas and types of organization: the extent, that is, to which they reveal a transition from old to new forms of self-defence. Are they only the clamour of exiles encouraged by this or that foreign influence? Are they mere gestures of violence or disordered *jacqueries*? Or do they in fact demonstrate a real because widely realized development from the reformist "nationalism" of the 1950s to ideas about the future which go beyond a certain liberalization of existing structures, beyond a simple "Africanization" of these structures, and look towards "liberation" within structures so different as to justify the term "revolution"? If so, the struggles represent historical phenomena of first-class importance.

Richard Gibson's book offers no such treatment in depth. This is not

because its author is altogether unaware of the historical dimension, but because he has failed, or perhaps not tried, to penetrate beneath the surface of events and opinions. With simplistic formulas that have come to be familiar, he takes us through a dreary tale of exile politics, breakaways, splits and personal intrigue, duly awarding this movement a good mark for being "pro-Peking", or that movement a bad mark for being "pro-Moscow", or a variety of other marks for other supposed loyalties, rather as though he were dealing with puppets on conflicting strings.

No doubt such puppets may be found upon the scene: no doubt the South African Communist Party, the author's special *bête noire* (or, as he makes it appear, *bête blanche*) has often made an ass of itself, and at no times more egregiously than when dancing to Moscow's tune. But to say this is to say nothing new (much less surprising). It is, incidentally, to miss the personal heroism of quite a few South African communists. Far more deplorably, it is to miss the interesting questions about movements which have enjoyed, or now enjoy, a mass support and even a mass participation. To what ideas

have these movements responded, and in what conditions, and with how much real reference to European and Asian examples? To what extent has material aid from communist sources to be seen as merely contingent to the application of indigenous policy, especially in the absence of any other sources of material aid?

On all such questions, and the evidence for weighing them, *African Liberation Movements* tells little more than one can learn from a diligent review of handouts, communiqués and newspaper reports. Because of its selectivity, moreover, it often tells less. It leads one through the names and labels as though these had some final value in themselves, leaving aside the large probability that they often represent the manoeuvres of an inevitable opportunism or the chimera of their antagonists' propaganda. But surely we are past the point where any such approach has value. It is rather like pigeonholing President Nyerere and his regime as "pro-Peking" because the Chinese are building a railway through Tanzania. They may be "pro-Peking", the railway being a very useful thing and no one else prepared to build it: but how far

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Sticking by the False Shuffle

W. C. FIELDS:
Fields for President
163pp. Peter Owen. £2.80.

The reputation of Fields, so appropriately initiated W.C., looms higher today than ever, higher even than in his successful 1930s. Hence the English publication at last of *Fields for President*, which appeared first in the United States in 1940.

The American edition did not cause much of a stir at the time. Political feelings ran too high and voices were raised too loudly to applaud or denounce Roosevelt's New Deal, the CCC, the AAA and the NRA for the hoarse rude voice of the pin-cushion-nosed comedian to be heard proclaiming policies only marginally more ridiculous than that of paying pig-farmers for not raising shots. *Fields for President*, among other things, committed what to many Americans is the sin against the Holy Ghost. It was funny about money.

More than thirty years (and many political nostrums) later, W. C. Fields, with such great principles as "Never give a sucker an even break", is far more credible than any politician on offer, and even when he is not much funnier, at least he means to be.

I am truly a candidate with both feet on the ground. I take no fold-deal from any man, much less any fiddle-faddle. And when, on next November fifth, amidst thunderous cheering and shouting and throwing of babies out of the window, I shall, my fellow citizens, offer no such empty panacea as a New Deal, or an Old Deal, or even a Re-deal. No, my friends, the reliable old False Shuffle was good enough for my father and it's good enough for me.

His book cannot be appreciated by anybody who has not heard that unforgettable voice, as melodious as nutmeg on a grater, as smooth as a sharkskin cornpaper. Fields wrote as he spoke, building climaxes from which, after a deliberate pause, to ascend to dizzying anticlimaxes. As an actor, Fields wrote not only his

own material but also the scripts of many of his films. His book reads like a protracted variety performance, cast in the form of an electoral address, but embracing the whole of his philosophy, his views on marriage, income tax, babies, health, and success in business.

Groucho Marx, the comedian Fields was most akin to, adopted a persona for his performances. But the public and the private sides of W. C. Fields were as close (and as barnacled) as the two shells of an oyster. Interlarded with his presidential address are biographical notes by Michael A. Taylor, who has also chosen stills from his films. They are all of a piece:

When asked "Do you like children?" he replied in his most endearing rasp: "I do if they're properly cooked!"

He made it a habit to open an account in most of the large cities he visited, and he often opened them under assumed names (Mahata Kane Juvenis, Otis Cribbscott, etc.). Whether he did this to hide his money from greedy relatives or from the government, or just to assure himself that getaway money was always nearby was never entirely clear. . . . In 1944 . . . Fields confided that he even had about \$50,000 spread around war-infested Germany. . . . "In case that little bastard wins."

Even when deductions are made for the embellishments of publicity men, Fields was nearly as singular off-stage as he was on. The little light merely enabled him to be more himself. Reality did not live up to his comic expectations:

When I opened the front door, there before me stood Mrs. Neville Pratt, a friend of long standing. She had run down hastily from a nearby nudist camp without even stopping to comb her hair.

"Godfrey Daniel! What brings you here?" I cried. "Aren't you cold without your gloves?"

Everyday life did not bring its Mrs. Neville Pratts and so they had to be invented.

Whereas Groucho is just a superb wisecracker, Fields had a flair for surrealist humour, well exempli-

fied by his short Biography of Old Tom, "the only common house fly who ever received a degree from Harvard Medical School." At the zenith of his career, Old Tom was the toast of the far sex as well as the foul. The picaresque adventures of Old Tom took him from Grand-aunt Fanny Dalbo to Professor Hymie Schickelgruber's fly circus. A Musca domestica who had lived with the Morgans and the Vanderbilts, Tom was disgusted at being called a horse fly, plant louse, Diptera Muscidea and other terms of abuse. After quitting the circus, he went to live in a Bowery boarding house and met "an English relative named

A manager's memories

CLAUDE KINGSTON:
It Don't Seem a Day Too Much
208pp. Hale. £2.50.

The title seems to indicate that this is yet another nostalgic book about the London music halls but the contents are of quite another kind. Claude Kingston, a celebrated impresario, has written his memoirs of some sixty years of concert and theatre management in Australia and New Zealand.

Himself a fine musician, established in his career, he began while still very young to show appetite for showmanship. Imagination and resourcefulness enabled him to identify and exploit films, artists and spectacles. It was well that he developed this alternative skill, for a wrist defect cut short his activities as a pianist and organist.

He struck out strongly on his own by a speculative excursion to America in 1919, when he was thirty-one, and with the help of Percy Grainger, Daniel Mayer and others he signed up Mischa Levitzki, secured rights to a large range of publications and to Massenet's *Marie-Magdelaine*, heard Caruso sing and acquired some useful hints

Cecil, a famous fly in his own right, whose grandfather had been the original fly in the ointment." It was the beginning of a noble career which ended after service in three continents with heroic suicide by jumping on to a flypaper, when he realized that he was suffering from Bright's Disease.

W. C. Fields unfortunately is best known by his impersonation of Mr Micawber. Never were two characters (who would obviously so much have enjoyed one another) worse confounded. Mr Micawber optimistically believed that something would turn up. Fields, a pessimist, feared it would be a bailiff, dick or process

server rather than a sucker. He was, however, unforgettable in the role of Micawber for film and television viewers.

Fields for President will make a new afficionado. Michael A. Taylor's comping could be said to "rasped" (though having made the point, need one repeat it?), but it is a physical impossibility that he "gargled" at the same time as giving the public, and his responses to the press.

To start with, in Ibsen's case there is virtually no feed-back from the letters recorded in this volume; so the book is completely away, in the field, reference to the historical situation at large "is such as English is spoken"—a phrase as commonly held in the common sense of the word as "Ibsen" is.

His memoirs will also be valued for their illumination of the commercial activity of international theatre. The subject is not at all well documented and Mr Kingston's recollection of risks taken, losses done, personalities reacting to one another and power struggles within and outside the organization are extremely illuminating. A few elements of the book is the record of a variety of experience, from family life to the curious episode of a ballroom homicide, all done in a concise and sincere way.

One of the book's achievements is to give a vindication of the Australian and New Zealand stage to the world of music and the stage. The roll-call is resonant and splendid. For many readers, though—and the book can be recommended to the circle than lovers of the art—the most lasting impression will be the author's own personality, with its fine human qualities and its partial sociability.

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THE TITLE, the terms of the promotional statements, i.e. the General Editor's Preface, and expectations created by the other volumes in the "Critical Heritage" series combine to promise something other than what is actually the case of *Ibsen*. The emphasis for the series still

is "the reception given to Ibsen by his contemporaries or near-contemporaries", a knowledge of which is then supposed to help the reader to the state of criticism at the time of the writer's historical situation, the nature of his immediate public, and his responses to the pressures.

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Anglo-American Ibsenists

MICHAEL EGAN (Editor):
Ibsen: The Critical Heritage
505pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £6.

of its composition, it had been staged in Berlin, Trondheim, Leipzig, Abo, Christiania, Copenhagen, Gothenburg, Stockholm, London, Chicago and Rome, with Paris following very shortly afterwards. A framework of European events of this kind is essential if one is to "place" Ibsen—anything but the most inward-looking and provincial way—in his appropriate "historical situation". While the production of *Ghosts* at J. T. Grein's Independent Theatre in 1891, and the furor it provoked, are very properly central to the volume as it stands, the complementary performances of the same play at Berlin's Freie Bühne in 1889 and at Antoine's Théâtre Libre in Paris in 1890 are (in the case of the first) not at all, and (in the case of the second) only fortuitously represented by the fact that George Moore happened to have been there. Yet these separate events were, in a most important way, all part of one larger single happening.

But once this main point has been made, it has to be said that one small adjustment to the title—and thereby to the reader's expectations and attitudes—and all is satisfactorily resolved. Not Ibsen but *Ibsenism* is what this book is really about—Ibsenism of the familiar full-bodied Anglo-American kind, with no trace of *Ibsenismus* or *Ibsenisme* to contaminate it. And within these tighter de facto terms of reference the book is found to perform much more satisfactorily.

Seen here raw, in all the authentic phrases of the period, the phenomenon of Ibsenism becomes even more preposterous than the astonishing thing we all suspect it to have been. Morally to read in the pages of the *Shaw's Quintessence of Ibsenism*—the commonest source of our information—of the critical abuse that followed the London performances of Ibsen is to be twice distanced from immediacy: for Shaw based much of his brief account on an article by William Archer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* which was itself a kind of summary. To go now direct, with the help of this volume, not merely to the text of the Archer article but also to many of the dramatic notices and leading articles on which he drew—Clement Scott's in *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily News*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Evening News* and *Post*,

and of course, notoriously, the *Licensed Victualers' Mirror*—is further to sharpen one's already keen sense of incredulity that public reaction could ever have been so lunatic.

It is right that the effect of reading these contemporary accounts should be wholly ambivalent: on the one hand wickedly entertaining, they are nevertheless deeply depressing to the liberal spirit. One sees how the editor must have been under constant temptation to give way to the merely hilarious. It is as easy to play Ibsenism for laughs as it is to play Pastor Manders in *Ghosts* or Hjalmar Ekdal in *The Wild Duck* for laughs, and equally fatal. On the whole the editor has preserved the balance well. The absurdities of T. Weber's early translation of *A Doll's House*—where, among a hundred exquisite infelicities, Nora is described not as "a hunted dove" but as "a chased pigeon", and where her final great curtain line comes out as "That cohabitation between you and me might become a matrimony!"—a line that made Harley Granville-Barker want to offer a prize at RADA to the student who could manage to speak it without making her audience laugh—these absurdities certainly approach the farcical. But they and the feebly satirical poems and those "sequels" that chronicled life *chez* Helmer after Nora had slammed the door on husband and children are all necessary ingredients, all belong just as properly to the "mix" of Ibsenism as do the pompousities of *The Daily Telegraph* and the cries of outraged purity of the *Gentleman* and the *Sporting Woman*.

Some of the omissions in these pages are nevertheless surprising, a few of them so conspicuous that one has to assume deliberate editorial policy: they are names too big to have been missed out by simple oversight. There is nothing from Georg Brandes, whose full chapter on Ibsen in his *Eminent Authors*, published in New York as early as 1886, was a key document in the shaping of Ibsen's wider reputation, especially in America; nothing from

Philip Wicksteed, whom nevertheless the editor in his introduction ranks, with Archer and Gosse, as being more important than Shaw in the defence of Ibsen in the early 1890s; nothing either from Max Nordau's chapter on Ibsen in his widely read *Degeneration* of 1895. A number of other lesser though nevertheless well-known names from the Ibsenist scene in England and America also unaccountably fail to find a place: Robert Buchanan, W. L. Courtney, R. Brimley Johnson, A. B. Walkley, William Morton Payne. Instead a heavy emphasis has been given to unsigned or pseudonymous pieces from the daily and periodical press: nearly 100 of them out of a total of 180. It is good to have these things now so readily accessible, for many of them are not easily come by these days; and as a mirror reflecting how nineteenth-century British and American society in general responded to Ibsen's work, the device works well. What it does less well is trace the twists and turns, the ups and downs of Ibsen's reputation as it passed through the hands of individual and influential contemporaries, or illuminate the roles of particular critics in the building up of a total response.

The editor is clearly not without interested concern for problems of this kind. He has a number of revealing things to say about what Ibsen and Henry James did for each other. He offers an unorthodox view of the part played by Shaw, suggesting that the latter's role in the Ibsen controversy has been greatly exaggerated, not least by Shaw himself:

Through successive editions of *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* and in his letters, prefaces and journalism, he built up the myth . . . of the overwhelming significance of his own contribution. As a defender of Ibsen in the early 1890s, however, he was far less important than Archer, Gosse or even Philip Wicksteed. . . .

(Incidentally, the volume gives evidence that the term "Ibsenism" was current in the London press a whole year before Shaw delivered his Fabian lectures on Ibsenism in 1890.) What does not come through very clearly, despite the inclusion of a fair number of pieces by them, is the nature of the crucial roles played by William Archer and Edmund Gosse. Had the selection included, for example, Archer's blis-

tering attack on Gosse in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, entitled "A translator traitor" (which, as it happens, is not listed in the bibliography, either), in which he denounced Gosse's recently published translation of *Hedda Gabler* as

so inconceivably careless and so fantastically inaccurate as to constitute a cruel injustice to Henrik Ibsen . . . one of the very worst translations on record which reproduces the terse and nervous original about as faithfully as a fourth form schoolboy, translating at sight, might be expected to reproduce a page of Tacitus. . . .

some light might have been directed on what still remains a dark corner: the complex personal and professional relationship between the two men who more than anybody else were responsible for creating Ibsen's reputation in the English-speaking world. Certainly, to state baldly, as the editor's comment here does, that "for the premiere of *Hedda Gabler*, the play was translated by Edmund Gosse" is to court, is to leave unremarked an important and acrimonious behind-the-scenes battle involving Gosse, Archer, Heinemann and Ibsen himself which had far-reaching consequences for the manner in which Ibsen's works ultimately reached the English public. Nor does the shaping influence exerted by the Ibsenist actresses get particularly searching treatment. One thinks, for example, of what Elizabeth Robins (who played Hedda) revealed about this self-same production and the translation which was used:

The translators . . . allowed us to collaborate in a somewhat more speakable version for stage use. . . . I have somewhere several sets of page proofs of *Hedda Gabler* as they left the hands of the translators; one set scored over in Marion Lan's handwriting, one with mine; and our final agreed recommendations. These Mr Archer fully criticized, sometimes denounced and utterly declined; but the final result was, I think, a very speakable, very playable version.

Three points of solid merit about the book: the American reaction is, deservedly, given much fuller treatment than it generally gets in discussions of Ibsenism; the catalogue of English translations, theatrical performances, and critical essays and reviews (up to 1906) is extremely useful; the index is exemplary.

One question-mark remains. If the determining criterion for the inclusion of a foreign writer in this series is to continue to be how completely he functioned as an English author, and whether he provoked contemporary English criticism in sufficient bulk to fill a standard "Critical Heritage" volume, one wonders whether any other foreign writer will ever make it. For in this respect Ibsen seems to be in a league by himself.

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Viewpoint

BY JOHN GROSS

I see that the publishers, in the wake of the recent controversy, are resolutely re-advertising the Little Black Sambo books. Not that there can be much call for them from the purely commercial point of view: up to last year, if I've counted correctly, *Little Black Sambo* itself had gone through thirty-six printings (to say nothing of the special Large-Size Edition with Cut-Out Supplement), while Quibba, Quasha, Bobtail, and the rest of them remain in equally steady demand. And it is easy enough to see why. Helen Bonnerman's stories have the authentic fairy-tale touch; their fantasy is never laboured; they stand up well to the stern test of bedtime repetition. As for their underlying ethos, it is surely quite inoffensive: if anything, they are to be commended for offering children a series of small non-white heroes with whom they can sympathize and empathize (not least when *Little Black Sambo* demolishes 169 pan-cakes at a sitting).

And yet... Some of the letters to the press defending the books were indignant: nobody likes seeing a childhood favourite trampled into the political dust. Others were jocular: who wants to be convicted of undue solemnity about something so diminutive and absurd? All perfectly natural—but then so were the letters of counter-protest from coloured readers for whom it hadn't been much fun, after listening to the stories at school, to find themselves promptly and not altogether unpredictably dubbed "Sambo" in the playground.

A good deal of the trouble surely stems from the name itself. At any rate, it is hard to believe that Quibba and Quasha and Bobtail alone would have occasioned anything like the same outcry. But—I quote from Stanley Elkin's book on slavery—the name "Sambo" has come to be synonymous with "race stereotype": a stereotype with overtones of affectionate contempt which do not have to be spelt out (and it is no doubt, rather more apparent than the affection). Twenty years ago, incidentally, there was a minor furor in New York about deleting a reference to "Sambo" from a textbook by no less eminent a pair of historians than Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager. And indeed, after everything that has happened since those days, any American who has followed the *Little Black Sambo* correspondence must have had the feeling of stepping back at least a generation.

At one level, none of this has anything to do with Helen Bonnerman; and there are certainly more important things to worry about than these (to themselves) innocent little

peepshows. Still, there is a problem—a small one, perhaps, but not so small that it should simply be chortled away.

Racial animosity may be the crudest form of prejudice, but how intricate some of its convolutions can be! Just after reading a Letter to the Editor about *Little Black Sambo*, I came across an item in the same newspaper reporting the death of the American writer Maurice Samuel, and shortly afterwards (by what must sound at first like one of those grasshopper leaps which Pelmanism once offered to cure) I found myself recalling a comment by Samuel in his essay on Proust. Quite early on in *A la recherche*, Marcel describes how, whenever he brought home a new friend who happened to be Jewish, his grandfather would start humming "O, God of our fathers" from *La Juive* or "Israel, break thy chain". He was afraid that his visitor would recognize the tune, and he able to reconstruct the words; at the same time, "these little eccentricities on my grandfather's part implied no ill-will whatsoever towards my friends". Before Samuel drew attention to it, I had never been particularly struck by that last remark—which was inattentive of me, since it is really very odd, especially if one concludes, rightly, I think, despite the lack of concrete evidence in the novel) that Marcel himself, like his creator, is partly Jewish. As Samuel put it,

If I were a muklak and couldn't bring home a Negro friend without my all-white grandfather humming the tune of *Sweeney Todd* or *Old Black Joe*, I should man by any means absolve the old man of it will.

I hasten to add that Samuel was not trying to draw up an indictment against Proust's defective liberalism. His essay, "The Concealments of Marcel" (it appeared in *Commentary* a few years ago) could only have been written by someone for whom *A la recherche* was an inexhaustible masterpiece.

It is a pity that Samuel did not rate more space from the obituarists over here. He was an attractive, highly-gifted writer, and in particular much the most effective interpreter of the old Jewish culture of Eastern Europe in the English-speaking world, sensitive and sure-footed in a field where ignorant or sentimental travesty is all too often the order of the day. He also had a strong feeling for England; the fact grew up in Manchester, though he went to America as a young man, while when he touched on English literature you could usually rely on him for something acute and unexpected. In one of his books, for instance, he quotes Kipling:

Ship me somewhere east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't nothin'
Commandments an' a man can raise a thirist....

—and then adds mildly that somewhere east of Suez was of course precisely where the Ten Commandments were first promulgated.

I would be curious to know what schoolchildren who used it between the wars (and some 15,000 copies were sold) made of D. H. Lawrence's *Movements in European History*, which has just been reissued—for the benefit of students of Lawrence rather than students of history—by the original publishers, the Oxford University Press. At its weakest, it is pure comic-strip. (Louis XV: "he flicked his jewelled fingers, and said with a smile, 'After me, the Deluge'".) At its best, it has passages which no one else could have written, such as the brilliant and rather sinister account of the Huns. The note of hero-worship, as might have been foreseen, is fairly constant: Richelieu "was a wonderful man, with a terribly strong will, and a great, subtle intellect"; Napoleon "was a wonderful military genius, but he was also a brilliant ruler in peace time", etc. Lawrence believed in great men, and "great" is the most overworked word in the book. On the other hand he nowhere tries to pretend that cruelty and bloodshed are other than what they are, and underlying all his ferocities there is a substratum of commonsense and admiration for the arts of peace.

From the point of view of his politics, the most noteworthy feature of the new edition is the epilogue, which has never appeared in print before: it was written in 1924 and turned down at the time after an unfavourable reader's report from C. R. L. Fletcher (the Oxford don who had collaborated with Kipling on a school history of England a dozen years earlier). Fletcher objected, among much else, to the yoking together of Lloyd George and Horatio Bottomley as the Joint Voice of the People; "the two great voices in England during the thick of the War"; he also found the style "epileptic"—and one knows what he means. But although the piece hardly shows Lawrence at his most coherent, it does contain one or two passages of considerable interest, including an unequivocal rejection of Fascism as he had seen it at work in Italy. Which does not prevent him from going on to peddle his own alternative and decidedly hazy doctrine of strong leadership, a leadership of "natural Noblesse". As far as I can make out, by the way, he would not have quarrelled with the idea of the Common Market in principle, though he would have maintained that in practice it would only succeed with a Napoleon to guide it and direct its aggressive energies outwards.

A great united Europe of productive working people, all mutually equal, will never be able to continue and remain firm unless it unites also round one great chosen figure, some hero who can lead a great war as well as administer a wide peace.

One of the more absorbing publicity hand-outs I have come my way is a calendar compiled by a research company in Michigan, listing the birthdays of 1,000 writers, artists, and (loosely speaking) creative figures—the illustrious and the not so illustrious, the living as well as the dead. It's very much a display of pure research, of knowledge pursued for its own sake; at any rate, I can't off-hand think of any practical use to which one could put the information that Stewart Alphonse Disraeli (May 17), or that a similar false-unites Walter de la Mare and Alice Fitzgerald (April 25), F. R. Leavis and Isaac Bashevis Singer (July 14), Savonarola and Leonard Cohen (September 21), the Venerable Bede and Edmund Gosse (May 26), to say nothing of Helme and Alan Bullock (Decem-

ber 13) or Spinoza and William Buckley Jr (November 24). Use what other auspices are we likely to see Gladstone going down in history together with Robert Russell (November 29)? And when, again, every November 16, shall I see Bright, Michael Arlen and Louis meet again?

Even for the horoscopically inclined, the results must be meagre, although it's gratifying to learn that Keynes was born on Adam Smith's birthday (June 10) and a few of the other couplets are at least suggestive: Sylvia Plath and Dylan Thomas (October 27), Colette and Phinias T. Barnum (May 5), Norman Mailer and Zane Grey (January 31). The one thing which seems to be established beyond doubt is that if you want to be a genius, some natal stars are a good deal more auspicious than others. Among writers, October 7 has made do with James Whitcomb Riley; August 28 leads off with Goethe and Tolstoy.

One of the contributors to *Bookings of Virginia Woolf* has put herself into Proust's corner by collecting that Vanessa Bell had a monolithic quality... even if it said little there emanated from enormous power, a pungency to the smell of crushed sage. This is funny enough to mention to a friend, and was so gently rebuffed could I be so sure that I wasn't people who gave of emanation of crushed sage? The matter was then put to the test: the kitchen, and I have to admit I was wrong, that the aroma recognizably human. The general impression among those present was one of ecclesiastical, possibly copal vibes; but anyway, I must mend the experiment.

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Duckworth books



"Girl on a Pier, Walberswick", 1886 (from Philip Wilson Steer, 1860-1942).

The background music of Steer

BRUCE LAUGHTON:
Philip Wilson Steer 1860-1942
30pp plus 213 plates. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £8.

IT IS EVER-GROWING interest in English art that is a feature of our time has inevitably directed attention to the period running from the formation of the New English Art Club in 1882 to the exhibition of Wyndham Lewis's Group X at the Mansard Gallery in 1920. It embraces the *Yellow Book* and *Bluest*, the Post-Impressionist and Vorticism, the birth of the Camden Town School, and it has much to offer the general historian as well as the specialist. A lead in exploring its ramifications in the later phase was given by John Russell in a shrewd and elegant essay contributed to the Oxford University Press volume *Edwardian England*, edited by Simon Nowell-Smith.

Since then other publications have contributed towards a deeper understanding of Edwardian art, such as Richard Ormrod's book on J. S. Sargent, which presented a fresh one of its most typical offspring, the bold though often reluctant portrait of the grand and rich, and the undercolourist who depicted many of the resorts so appreciated in the days of the Grand Tour. New explorations of the intricate interplay of forces, intellectual and social as well as artistic, that obtained in these years were made by Samuel Hynes in *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*; he emphasized that the era was one of anxiety as well as of good-living, and he saw 1910, the year of the first Post-Impressionist exhibition, as marking a watershed in national life.

As yet, no history of English art of this period treats in depth its many movements, though excellent ones are made by Quentin Bell in his *Crucial Years, Victorian Artists and Bloomsbury*. Doubtless much pertinent information will be contained in Dennis Farr's forthcoming volume in the *Oxford History of Art*. Other books germane to the subject are an active preparation by Michael Holroyd's

biography of Augustus John, who had one foot in the world of the 1890s, the other in the Jazz Age. Unfortunately, some of the most talented artists of the early years of the century, such as Claudie Brzeska, Gilman, Gore and Innes, died young; if they had lived English art might well have been richer.

This was a time when England was the hub of a mighty empire; by the upper and middle classes, but there was no school of art, nothing of the calibre of Constable or Turner, to match the material power. Most patrons, critics and artists, however, felt no need to blush for the national achievement. During late Victorian and Edwardian days, the graces of the Royal Academy waxed fat and could live in style; Leighton House is the equivalent of the Villa Lenbach in Munich, both fitting residences for artist-princes.

It is worth recalling that the Pre-Raphaelites and their successors, such as Burne-Jones, were appreciated by an elite on the other side of the Channel and that two of the first books devoted to this group were by Frenchmen, Ernest Choseau and Robert de la Sizeranne, and that the Art Nouveau designers and the Glasgow "Boys" had foreign audiences as well. Even if our amateurs were usually blind to the contribution of the French Impressionists, they appreciated Corot and Millet, the School of The Hague, Boldini, Mancini and Portinari. Rudin, moreover, was a seminal force on English sculpture, as is shown by the work of John Tweed and Charles Ricketts. It was a sign of Rodin's reputation that, after a banquet held in his honour at the Royal Academy, the students pulled up his carriage. Then, too, an increasing number of young artists found their way to Paris, the mecca of art; some, like Rodin, O'Connor, spent the rest of their lives there. Students of this generation were more Francophile than their modern counterparts.

In his essay Mr Russell observed that Steer's best pictures contain "an Elgarian fullness and richness, the paint which may strike us as the

purest Edwardian". This neat remark does much to explain the lushness of Steer's landscapes and the generally comfortable and unstrained nature of his vision. As a painter he was long a cosmopolitan, for even if he spent only a short time in Paris (where he failed to learn French) his support for the *Salon des Artistes Français* is revealed by the references in his pictures to Degas, Manet, Monet and Seurat.

Not much has been written about Steer. There is a life of him by his friend D. S. MacColl and essays by Robin Ironside, Sir John Rothenstein and Andrew Forge, and his name crops up, of course, in contemporary memoirs and autobiographies. This gap is now partly filled by the publication of Bruce Laughton's volume in the "New Oxford Studies in the History of Art and Architecture" series; it is well illustrated and contains a valuable and welcome catalogue of the oils.

Steer himself was sceptical about the feasibility of a biography: "Nobody knows me intimately enough", he said. Dr Laughton has avoided anything but the barest outline of his hero's life and personality; however, he does print in an appendix a delightful account by Rose Pettigrew of her relations with Steer when both were young. This Chelsea sparrow sat for Millais and Whistler and was mothered by Mrs Whistler, who had no children of her own. Steer had a crush on Rose (a current pattern with nineteenth-century English artists in their penchant for young girls); but, although the girl, then fourteen, says she loved him, it was an innocent affair: "He asked me one day if I'd let him kiss me; I said I didn't mind, but didn't show much eagerness, not nearly as much as he was evidently used to."

Obviously, there were unexpected sides to Steer; for instance, he was a shrewd investor; an adept at chess; a keen numismatist with a passion for Greek coins; and an ardent lover of wine. He was also a collector of Chinese porcelain and Chinese bronzes; one of his best finds was the Yuan dynasty painting of "The Drunken Sage" which he bequeathed to the British Museum. Although never in the same class as a collector as Ricketts

and Shannon, he was an habitué of Christie's and George Moore admired his eye and his knack of picking up cheaply the delightful treasures that filled his house. 109 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea.

Steer was a bit of a manby-pamby; he was a valetudinarian, frightened of east winds (complaining one day that Henry James kept him talking in one) and draughts. There is a revealing anecdote about him going to stay with Violet Hamersley at Maidenhead, armed with thick and thin underclothes and suits of varying weight. Fortunately, the weather was fine. As this witness recalled: "Steer wore a straw hat; kept a finger in his shirt, and from time to time went into the house to remove a garment or put one on according to the moisture of his skin." Steer, who remained a bachelor, liked being coddled, and his servants and friends saw to it that he was. One feels that like many Englishmen of his generation he was haunted by the shadow of the nursery, understandably, perhaps, for not everyone wants to step outside his warm cocoon. During much of his lifetime he was tended by his old nanny, Mrs Raynes, who had promised his father to look after him; sadly, Dr Laughton has not illustrated Steer's moving portrait of the old lady which is now in the Tate Gallery. After Mrs Raynes's death, "Flo", who had been well trained by her predecessor, took over and cared for father, as she called Steer, until the end.

Yet Steer was no fuddy-duddy. Although blind and an octogenarian, he took the war bravely; Sir John Rothenstein, who went to see him at this time, remarked on his interest in life and his curiosity about the new world that would emerge in the postwar era. He had reserves of strength, evidently. He was a shy man, a bit of an amateur no doubt, but dedicated to his work. The crust hid a romantic. He attempted to embody in his pictures his dreams of young girls—those *Jeunes filles en fleurs* who pass an eternal summer at Walberswick; he evoked the cushioned ease of the pre-1914 drawing-room; and he delighted in the great sweeps of the English countryside.

Dr Laughton's conscientious and professional account of Steer contains fresh material. He investigates such matters as Steer's relations with Sickert, and publishes interesting drawings by the former of musical hall themes; he arranges Steer's work in a proper sequence so that its development can be seen squarely; and he is just to the watercolours. Nevertheless, Steer somehow escapes the author; perhaps he is buried under too much art-historical luggage; moreover the painstaking analysis of so many pictures seems overdone for a relatively minor figure.

The author goes over the question of Steer's relations with French art with the proverbial tooth-comb. He dearly loves a game of Happy Families, though at times he seems to mistake Mr Potts the painter for Mr Bun the baker. He argues, for instance, that Steer's small portrait of a student friend H. W. Macaulay, painted in Paris in 1883-84 and possibly exhibited in the Salon of 1884, offers evidence of "a creditable debt to the early portraits of Degas and Fantin-Latour". But is the debt to Degas as exact as the author believes or is the work no more than a typical production of the Parisian ateliers?

Dr Laughton claims that "Lady in Grey (Mrs Montgomery)", now at Bristol, owes as much to Velázquez as to Whistler. This complicates a simple matter, for Whistler, who influenced Steer strongly, is the American himself was indebted to the Spanish master. Some of Dr Laughton's comparisons are valuable, if often rather self-evident; but it is exaggerated to relate "At the Well (Red Cap)" to the small genre portraits of Corot; just as it is overdoing it to say that "The Artist's Model" of 1921 (National Gallery, Ottawa) "has a simple strength about it in some ways comparable to Picasso's monumental classical figures of the early 1920s". In another instance, he drags in

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—Time Out. £1.00

FABER & FABER

Prophet's cry

KENNETH CRAGG:
The Event of the Qur'an
208pp. Allen and Unwin. £3.75.

"The Scripture of Islam is emphatically an event as well as a document," begins Kenneth Cragg, who subjects the Koran and its "event" in Muhammad's intensely personal prophetic vocation to the wrestling of a complex style which is always aware of the reservations required for Muslim, Christian and academic acceptance. As in his other writings, Bishop Cragg makes every effort to interpret Islamic faith and devotion to those outside that religion, though the difficulties are enormous and perhaps insuperable. How far, if at all, is it acceptable to any Muslim to speak of Muhammad's feelings or teachings in the Koran, his "deep aversion to the poets," his "reputation of woolfayers, in what is for faith the very Word of God? And amid all the wide-ranging arguments one misses a judgment of cardinal importance for Muslim and Christian alike: is the Koran divine revelation and what are the implications of the answer?

There are many valuable discussions here. A long consideration of the four most popular suras (1, 112, 113, 114) makes up to some extent for the astonishing paucity of non-Muslim commentaries on the Koran. The mysterious letters at the head of twenty-nine chapters of the Koran are interpreted as "tokens of the celestial language," rather than the scribal initials which some Western scholars "characteristically" have suggested. Similarly the "native" or "unlettered" prophet is taken to indicate that Muhammad was not a scholar, since he relied on inspiration rather than libraries. This view allows for the Islamic tradition that he was illiterate and therefore did not invent the Word of God, and avoids the conclusion of translators like Bell that Muhammad wrote down

most of the Koran himself. Yet due emphasis is placed on the astonishing shortness of time for the composition of the Koran, "narrower, calendar wise, than that of any other religious document".

Despite efforts that have been made to show that Muhammad was a mystic and a pattern for later Sufism, the Persian and Indian overtones of Sufism are considered here to be remote from "the rugged native Semitic genius that speaks in the Qur'an". Whether the Semites were unmythical can be disputed, and Louis Massignon took pains to point out the Arab origins of Sufism and reject the notion of its exclusively Aryan character.

The "event" of the Koran is placed in the context of the celestial vision which said "Cry" to the chosen prophet, the "luminous" Arabic language which now received its scripture, the landscape of the Hijaz, the city markets, the crisis of emigration when Muslims turned from being a tolerated or persecuted minority to aim at domination from Medina, and the sense of history with its importance for Islamic faith and practice. The historical order is linked with the former prophets of the Bible which the Koran traces from Adam downwards, but to say that the sequence stops with Elijah and Elisha strangely ignores the Koran's inclusion of John the Baptist and Jesus, together with the less prophetic Zachariah and Mary. The treatment of many subjects in this book is often tortuous, and there is a liberal sprinkling of such favourite clichés as "by the same token". Neologisms like "Qurazite" and "Qurunicity" are understandable, but what is "eclectic", unknown to the OED? Yet for those who can struggle with problems of scripture, Bishop Cragg provides constant illumination on many issues of religious experience whether within or without Islam.

Lux perpetua

L. YARDEN:
The Tree of Light
A Study of the Menorah.
162pp. East and West Library. £3.75.

The menorah, or golden lamp, which figures with such prominence on the triumphal arch of Titus, the destroyer of the Israelite sanctuary, is described in the Bible as one of the most important cultic objects in the Temple of Jerusalem. But even after its removal to alien territory, it continued to haunt the imagination of the Jews, its representation appearing on tombstones and in ancient synagogues. Finally, in our own time, it has become the paramount emblem of the state of Israel in preference to the Star of David.

In this copiously illustrated little book (seventy pages of text and 230 photographs), L. Yarden tackles this fascinating subject in such detail that the reader is liable to lose sight of essentials. Associating the menorah with a mythical tree (tree of life—tree of life)—which is not a new idea—he speculates that this was an almond-tree, but fails to inquire into the reason for the widespread use of the symbol in late Jewish antiquity. Is it not likely that this was due, rather, to the popular etymology interpreting *Tanach*, the Law or Pentateuch, as light or enlightenment (or, *orayta*)? On tombstones, the identification of the two would point further to everlasting light, *lux perpetua*.

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Late Roman realities

PETER BROWN:
Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine
351pp. Faber and Faber. £3.25.

This book is a collection of Peter Brown's articles, essays and reviews from the past ten years or so. It is convenient to have these papers gathered in one place, but it is disconcerting, if one reads the collection as a whole, to have to switch from the casual manner, and fairly flimsy substance, of a review in the *Oxford Magazine* to a bibliographical survey where footnotes often outweigh the text. A narrower selection of material, and a systematization of the means of reference, would have added to the coherence of the collection.

The book does, however, provide an opportunity to take Mr Brown's measure as a scholar and an historian. This we are encouraged to do by the introductory essay, where he seeks to formalize his interests, and to justify the methods which he has adopted for their pursuit. In often almost romantic language, he tells us that his purpose has been to uncover not only the changes in society, but the changes in individuals which accompany and occasion social change. He would open the *abditia cordis* of late antique man, and discover therein why people in the fourth century increasingly chose to dissociate themselves from the classical past: "The evanescent that separated many late Roman men from the past had opened, first, in their own minds."

How far has Mr Brown succeeded? Only in part, if we measure him according to his own purposes. He tells us:

"I have found, increasingly, that, to find out why late Roman society changed as it did, I have had to go to the intimate realities of men's lives... to the heavy lumber of ideas at the back of their minds."

Again, "The long-term repercussions of the sharp thoughts of men in their loneliness, form part of the story I have wanted to tell." But precisely what we miss in the essays which follow is any account of men's thoughts or ideas in a stricter sense, any account of their philosophy or theology.

Mr Brown considers the appeal of Manichaeism. But he does not consider its philosophical appeal. Dualism and materialism had lurked in much of the history of earlier classical philosophy. Manichaeism presents both in a stark and uncompromising form. How difficult it was to escape from that fascination Saint Augustine tells us in some of the most powerful pages of the *Con-*

fusiones and it was more than any fascination of mood or social sentiment. The compulsion which Augustine felt in his adherence to Manichaeism was in part the compulsion of a nexus of ideas from which the philosophical elements in an average classical training of the fourth century, and earlier, were hardly able to effect a release.

There is a similar limitation in Mr Brown's analysis of sorcery. "Belief in sorcery is an element in the way in which men have frequently attempted... to relate themselves to the problem of evil." He argues that sorcery declined as the power of the Devil increased. But the great clash, on a philosophical and theological level, of pagan and Christian conceptions of evil does not send a tremor through these pages.

So again, the articles on Pelagius are subtle and suggestive in outlining the social and psychological reasons which made him, for a while, so popular in Rome; but the sheer force, and extremism, in the context of fourth-century thinking, of Pelagius's

conception of freedom is scarcely touched upon.

The same lack marks the essay on Saint Augustine's attitude to religion. The symptoms, on a human and an emotional level, of Augustine's eventual qualified acceptance, and use, of coercive force, charted with delicacy and insight, but the complexity of Saint Augustine's notion of freedom, and the philosophical reasons for this complexity, are scarcely to be found. Ideas, it is true, cannot be taken out of their historical context, but neither can they be reduced to mere conjunction of mood and event. Mr Brown has at times a brilliant touch in evoking the symptoms and the consequences of ideas that earned men's minds in late antiquity. But we need more than this to understand "the sharp thoughts of men in their loneliness" and "the heavy lumber of ideas at the back of their minds". Mr Brown can tell us what ideas they had, but he cannot tell us how they themselves, as primary factors in the determination of men's consciousness, he is silent.

Burgundy's monks

NOREEN HUNT (Editor):
Climac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages
248pp. Macmillan. £5.95.

The great Burgundian abbey of Cluny continues to attract scholarly attention. Within the past four years, in English alone, we have had Giles Constable's definitive edition of the letters of Peter the Venerable, Noeren Hunt's excellent study of Cluny under Hugh the Great, K. J. Conant's monumental volume on the architecture and art of the abbey buildings, and H. E. J. Cowdrey's study of the political and papal involvement of Cluny. Now Dr Hunt has collected ten recent essays by distinguished scholars, French, German, Italian and Spanish, each of which presents an aspect of Clunian life illuminated by past study and present research. It is a volume of high academic worth. English historians would be less insular and European scholars less insulated if similar topics from all periods of history could be made common property, by means of carefully selected and well-translated articles that have been recognized as authoritative in their field of origin.

Pre-eminent in the present collection are the essays of Kassius Hallinger on Clunian's spiritual life, of Anscar Mundó on the Clunians of the eastern Pyrenees, of Hansmartin Schwarzmaier on the Clunians of north Italy, and of Joachim Wollfash

with his brilliant analysis of Marcigny necrology, of which a page is shown on the jacket and a vexatious misprint of Marigny, a skillful detective work Dr Wollfash establishes the Marcigny presence of the early part of a little-known unidentified list of some 5,000 names, and demonstrates that more than half are certainly Clunian. In this and in his bibliographical notes he shows that the collection and interpretation of necrologies is a necessary and neglected task for students of Clunian influence. The technique of Namerization has here invaded a new medieval field. Dr Wollfash's essay deserves the attention of medievalists as an exercise in method. As a by-product, it also provides considerable number of unfamiliar female proper names such as Blanche (v'n. Restibilia, Solica and Wilma).

On broader issues Professor Conant on Clunian non-interest in the crusading idea, and Jean Leclercq on the monastic crisis of the eleventh and twelfth centuries will be of interest to most medievalists.

Dr Hunt introduces the collection with a survey of recent Clunian studies which is worthy of inclusion in its own right, and her editing of discreet annotation to supplement that of her authors, is exemplary. The translations, largely the work of the monks of Stanbrook Abbey, read like original compositions, idiomatically not colloquial.

Who shapes things to come?

JOHN JANTSCH:
Technological Planning and Social Futures
248pp. Cassell. £4.50.

GORDON WILLS with RICHARD WILSON, NEIL MANNING and ROGER HILDEBRANDT:
Technological Forecasting
248pp. Penguin. Paperback, 40p.

The relation between men's technology and their political and social future is always important, is confused never before by three radical writers. The closer integration of science and technology makes it possible to forecast or even plan the future of technology for decades with a confidence never felt before. The emergence of "information technology" has further enlarged the confidence of its adepts. Their power to forecast and shape the future, especially the technological development has left no doubt which seems to most non-technologists less controllable and more predictable than ever before.

These results are an eerie contrast to the confident voices of technological forecasters and the uncertainties of those who are less concerned to regard technology as a social determinant. This gulf is widened by the fact that many technologists are ignorant or impatient of political and social realities, and many political and social scientists are ignorant or suspicious of

their tribal cultures for the white man's way, it must be galling to hear the white men muttering among themselves that perhaps it was all a mistake. They hardly need agitators to tell them that, mistaken or not, past policies have left the white man rather better off than those whose cultures he has so ruthlessly destroyed. Many a dispossessed peasant must sometimes have marvelled that our motives for the rape of his lands were not gold or cattle or exotic virgins—body understandable to the primitive mind—but an apparently insatiable lust for margarine.

Magnus Pyke's quietly wicked book examines the social effects of food technology on producers, distributors and consumers. "Whenever the social has come into collision with the economic component, it is always the economic consideration which has triumphed." With the unerring confidence of a lecturer who opens his talk by putting his watch on his notes, Dr Pyke draws on the blackboard the harmless banana. To provide the two billion bunches that the United Fruit Company exported in the first thirty-five years of this century, some nasty things had to be

done to the inhabitants of South America:

"Abruptly these people... were brought in contact with a powerful dominant philosophy of what can best be described as 'pure' capitalism, which itself was based on the ready acceptance of Darwin's theory of the evolution of species. To those who accept the application of the biological principle of the survival of the fittest in social and particularly in economic affairs, it is not only permissible to succeed in business by outwitting and crushing competitors by every means possible, it is a moral duty to do so. The strong and wealthy, according to this philosophy, are not only more powerful and rich than poor weak people, they are also socially superior."

Quoting from Kepner and Southwell's *The Banana Empire*, Dr Pyke suggests that the provision of hospitals and transport systems and the reduction of disease have to be set against the record of a company that "throttled competitors, dominated governments, manipulated railroads, ruined planters, choked co-operatives, dominated over workers, fought organised labour and exploited consumers".

From the shabby tale of margarine

and bananas, and the horror story of sugar, Dr Pyke leads us to the present and the ironic moral of his thesis. In the past, the food technology of the West has destroyed other people's cultures. Now it erodes our own. The shop is giving way to the supermarket, and the supermarket may soon be replaced by the cash-and-carry discount warehouse. Here a family will be able to buy a container designed to fit their deep freeze which may hold all their provisions for weeks ahead. The family meal, already declining to a tele-snack, will become self-service, with everyone choosing pouches from the freezer and "freshening" the contents under infra-red grills. School meals will be served from automats, and the schoolboy's water pistol will achieve technological respectability as an instrument for rehydration.

To supply any animal and vegetable foods still required by consumers stuffed with spun protein analogue, farming will be superseded by agribusiness. This has reached such a degree of efficiency that it has been estimated that one man could now handle up to 1,000 pigs. The fish finger inexorably points in one direc-

tion: the detribalization we inflicted on others is now fraying what social bonds we ourselves retain. Shop-keeper and customer, husbandman and animal, mother and family, teacher and pupil—each of these bonds has depended in some way on the sale, distribution, cooking, or sharing of food. If we abolish the family meal, we remove one more contact between parents and children. If we make a milk that will keep for ever, and eliminate the milkman's daily call, how many social workers shall we need to make sure the increasing number of old people living alone are still alive?

Dr Pyke seems the sort of merry fellow one would like to have around at the end of the world. Driven to eat his nearest and dearest, he would still entertain those awaiting the pot with fascinating facts about human flesh. There really was a Mr Clarence Birdseye who saw the Eskimos leaving fish in the snow and got the idea of deep freezing. Cornflakes, often used as a symbol of Madison Avenue diabolism, were in fact invented by the Seventh Day Adventists as a morally neutral food. The Aswan dam was designed to improve the crops of the fellahs. By holding up the silt formerly swept out to sea in the annual floods it has now destroyed the sardine in the eastern Mediterranean—to the benefit, one supposes, of speculators, who will find many charming fishing villages ripe for redevelopment. A machine has been invented for picking lettuce. No one will make it because it is so efficient that only 600 would be needed to pick all the lettuce in the world.

Reading this book is like overhearing the scandal of some technocrats' conference. "Have you heard old Smithers has booked again? Got meteorology in his soya rissoles. Killing off the faps like flies." Then Dr Pyke heaves with laughter at the possibilities of a headless hen—to which, presumably, it would be impossible to be cruel.

He is more optimistic than some authorities about the benefits of the green revolution. He is so cursory about the phenomenal growth of the health food industry that one suspects and hopes he is saving that excellent joke for after the methyl cellulose mouse. But he has written a book that should be read by everyone who eats—preferably after meals.

F. R. LEAVIS'S RICHMOND LECTURE

its purpose and achievement
John Tasker

Mr Tasker has written a penetrating apology for the celebrated satirical masterpiece on the occasion of its tenth anniversary. He re-examines the Rede lecture in depth and contends that Snow's ostensible theme of the need to unite the two cultures was in fact a specious screen for propaganda on behalf of technological specialization. Snow's transparent purpose was simply the multiplication of technologists by our educational system. To this end everything else must be subordinated, teachers of the humanities intimidated, demoralized and cowed, and their work sabotaged. Mr Tasker pays tribute to Dr Leavis's buoyant defence of the unity of art and to the unforgettable devastation he wrought of the Rede Lecture. The essay also contains a witty treatment of our cultural bureaucracies, exemplified by the Snow lobby ("they kicked, they spat") and Cox & Dyson's *Critical Quarterly*.

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THE HUMAN WORLD

No. 7 contains an editorial on 'Mr Heath's Munch'; G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Contraception and Chastity'; F. R. Leavis on Blake, *Michael Black on Tolstoy*, and a long review of *The Times Literary Supplement*. 40p post free (50p after 30 June); annual sub. £1.30.

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Getting our wires crossed

R. A. S. HENNESSEY:
The Electric Revolution
190pp plus 39 photographs. Oriol Press. £3.50.

This book is as much about politics as it is about technology. It describes the development of the electricity supply industry from the time of the invention of the electric lamp until the passage of the Electricity Supply Act in 1926. It took many years for British legislation to appreciate that the strict application of the doctrine of free competition, with safeguards against monopoly, was likely to handicap the evolution of an electricity supply industry. This book traces the course of the debate over the shape which the industry should take.

Despite Britain's pioneer role in the development of the electric lamp the electricity supply industry in Britain did not for many years make the same progress as it did in the United States and in Germany. The obstacle in Britain was not so much technical as political. Electricity had to compete with the well-entrenched coal and gas industries and it was prevented from achieving its full potential because of statutory limitations designed to impose the dogma of universal competition.

Two Electric Lighting Acts in 1882 and 1888 led inevitably to a patchwork pattern of electricity supply from local authorities and private companies. Neighbouring undertakings were frequently prevented from any kind of cooperation. By the

beginning of the First World War there were over 320 local government undertakings and 230 companies. Because it was opposed to monopoly in any form Parliament granted supply rights to many small undertakings and prevented cooperation between them. The result was that within the British electricity supply system there was a wide variety of voltages and frequencies. Some undertakings adopted direct current and others alternating current. The electricity supply system was in a technical and administrative muddle. It was not until the Electricity Supply Act, 1926, that a new course was charted, leading eventually to an efficient national system.

Mr Hennessey has written an interesting book.

Literature and Western Civilization

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